

Mobility in Central and Eastern European Countries

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Introduction – Story of the passport

Until the time of the political transformation which begun in the Central Eastern European Countries (ECC) in 1989 we had to deal with the shortage economy and supply strangulation. This concerned all fields of citizens' life – the issue of mobility was among them a crucial one.

Looking back to the not so distant past, the possibility of having a passport in the CEE countries should be seen in more detail. Poland can serve here as an example as the situation in all the CEE countries was very similar.

In those times owning a passport – the document allowing a person to cross borders – was not, as one would think, an obvious fact. Every time one went and returned from abroad one had to give the passport back. In case of another journey it was necessary to strive for it again. This had both a down-to-earth and a philosophical meaning. It meant that our mobility depended on the authorities' will. In the case of mobility in the field of culture there were special institutions which handled trips of professionals from the cultural field. In Poland it was e.g. PAGART. It was there that people received their passports – the passes to legal departures and window for exploring the non-communist parts of the world. It would happen – rather frequently – that the passport was not waiting for us there – which meant that mainly due to political (or semi-political) reasons, we were denied it. This specific roulette: “the passport will or will not be given” often favoured staying in the destination countries for good, as one could not be sure of acquiring a passport ever again after returning to ones own country. In these times it was much easier to travel to other communist countries (although naturally less appreciated by those that travelled). For such trips one did not need a passport but only a special passport insertion – a passport ersatz. One did not have to give it in and so had always at hand and could use freely. It of course only allowed to cross borders of communist countries.

The transformation of the political and economic system in the ECC contributed to a significant, unimpeded flow of citizens. A passport issued for many years, cancellation of visa obligation on the EU territory, then travelling using just an ID, and now after joining the Schengen group, the possibility of crossing most borders without any documents, have all greatly facilitated the mobility of cultural professionals. Of course such a situation concerns mainly the EU member states and those embraced by the Shengen Treaty. People from countries like Ukraine or Belarus still have to strive overcoming the restrains from the previous period (passports and visas). That is one of the main reasons for the diversity within the countries of the CEE. This divers situation is described below in this text. Regardless of the present situation, it is worth remembering the many restrains form the not so far away past, and to take it into account when analysing the present situation.

Data sources and methodology

The paper is mainly based on own knowledge on the overall situation in the region, on interviews and Internet sources. On the one hand, Internet proved to be the best source of information (especially Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe www.culturalpolicies.net). On the other, it has been a problematic one. There are no overall sources of information in the Internet which would treat on mobility and at the same time provide links to specific programmes. Such information are scattered across the websites of various public and private institutions, organisations and international bodies. Additionally, official web sites of ministries of culture or of other public entities are quite often in the national languages.

Mobility, as a phenomenon in the cultural sector is only just beginning to be a topic of research. Moreover, in research on the cultural sector where mobility appears, it usually falls out of conclusions as little hard data is to be found. In the described region, no analyses have been found.

I. Mobility as a part of international co-operation

Bilateral and multilateral agreements

Elements of mobility support are to be found in **bilateral and multilateral agreements**. The first, at the state level, has its legal basis in inter-governmental agreements between two countries. The latter is carried out via: international organisations, regional bodies / units, regional agreements, cultural co-operation networks and cultural institutions – it involves a high range of players from different countries. Bilateral inter-governmental agreements were especially significant before the transformation. In times of the “Iron Curtain” they were the only ground, the only possibility for any kind of exchange between the countries in the region (the then communist countries) and the rest of Europe. Over the past years, their significance has been decreasing. Still however many of them are in force and in consequence help to support mobility.¹ For example in Hungary, on one hand, bilateral agreements still play a significant role in intercultural co-operation (The Education and Culture Ministry in Hungary has signed bilateral agreements with 105 countries, 55 of them are not active). On the other, their influence on mobility of artists is being limited – even though the exchange of experts, especially in the heritage field, is still an important issue in the bilateral agreements, in the arts, most co-operation projects are realised through other channels. The Slovak Republic established several intergovernmental commissions for bilateral international co-operation. One of them is the Slovak-Polish Intergovernmental Commission for Cross-border Cooperation – a working group on culture, education and exchange visits of young people (the organisers are the Slovak Ministry of Interior and Polish Ministry of Interior and Administration).

Bilateral agreements are now being replaced by the multilateral ones, and mainly by activities initiated by European organisations, initiatives undertaken by networks and institutions. A clear tendency here is networking, also on the international public level.

¹ Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage in 2006 had 68 binding agreements, Slovenia signed 47 international umbrella agreements.

Regional multilateral agreements – funds and networks

As regards the Central and Eastern European countries, multilateral regional agreements are extremely significant for co-operation and mobility itself. On their basis many **funds and networks** were brought to being.

The most important one is the **The Visegrad Group (V4)** - a regional multilateral agreement between four countries: Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovakia. All of the activities of the Visegrad Group are aimed at strengthening stability in the Central European region. The participating countries perceive their mutual co-operation as a challenge and its success as the best proof of their ability to integrate into structures such as the European Union. In order to strengthen the co-operation, in 2000 the Visegrad Fund² was established. It supports the development of common cultural, scientific research, and educational projects, exchanges between young people, promotion of tourism and cross-border co-operation. Among its projects, the most recent grant and the most important in relation to mobility is the Artist Residencies Programme. It was created to facilitate artistic exchanges of artists from the Visegrad Group countries willing to implement artistic projects in the area. The programme covers 3 month stays and assures fees of 750 euro for visiting artists and the same amount for the hosting organisations. Among the recipients of the Fund's support are mainly non-governmental organisations, municipalities and local governments, private companies, schools and universities and individual students and artists. The V4 Group is also seeking a platform of co-operation with partners from Ukraine and Belarus.

Another example is **The Ars Baltica** which was created in 1989 as a forum for multilateral cultural co-operation with an emphasis on common projects within the Baltic Sea Region. At present there are 10 member countries (Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Russia, and Sweden). It gives priority to art, culture and cultural history. Its goal is to implement common projects, with the intention that they will become regular networks of individuals and organisations. Co-operation between the members is carried out by meetings, exchanges of information and joint projects.

Central European Exchange Programme for University Studies (CEEPUS) was established in 1993. The member states are: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Romania, Hungary, and the Ukraine. In the framework of this programme, the ministries of culture support international exchanges of students of higher arts education institutions and provide funding for study visits.

In October 2004, six representatives of the national cultural institutions of Croatia (Croatian Cultural Association), Czech Republic (National Information and Consulting Centre for Culture), Hungary (Institute for Culture), Romania (National Centre for Preservation and Promotion of Traditional Culture), Slovakia (National Centre for Culture), and Slovenia (Republic of Slovenia Public Fund for Cultural Activities) signed a Joint Declaration. On its basis the **European Culture Cooperation** network was created. It is to support international cultural co-operation in the area of amateur, voluntary and socio-cultural activities within the framework of the European Union and neighbouring countries. It enhances the realisation of mutual cultural projects (festivals, exhibitions, etc.), professional and unprofessional artists mobility and co-operation among theatrical and music festivals.

² The International Visegrad Fund (IVF) is an international organisation based in Bratislava, founded by the governments of the countries of the Visegrad Group (V4) on June 9, 2000. The budget of the Fund is created by equal annual contributions of the four Member States. Since 2005, Member States agreed to contribute 750 000 EUR each, providing a total annual budget of 3 000 000 EUR. In 2006, the sum amounted to 5 million euro, thanks to the increased subscription of 1 250 000 EUR. The governing bodies of the Fund are the Conference of Ministers of Foreign Affairs and the Council of Ambassadors. The executive body of the Fund is composed of the Executive Director and the Deputy Executive Director. The administrative body of the Fund is the Secretariat.

The Central European Initiative (CEI), established in 1989, associates 18 Member States: Albania, Austria, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Macedonia, Moldavia, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine. It is an intergovernmental forum for political, economic and cultural co-operation among its member states. Its main aim was to help transition countries in Central Europe come closer to the EU. In the second half of 1990's, the member list was enlarged by states of South-Eastern and Eastern Europe. CEI financially supports diverse projects in the field of music, literature, performing arts as well as training courses and seminars proposed by the member countries. Its activities are also focused on intercultural dialogue, preservation of cultural and religious diversity, supporting cross-border co-operation in the artistic field - including mobility of individuals and groups.

The most distinct change in foreign cultural policy has been fuelled in many countries by accession to the **European Union** structures. Not all of the countries of the region are members of the European Union but its activities influence all of them. The EU has numerous programmes supporting mobility (e.g. promotion of transnational mobility of people working in the cultural sector is one of the aims of the European Culture 2007-2013 programme). The programmes are mainly addressed to its member states but it also often, through its programmes' outlines, encourages to engage into the projects, people from outside the EU. It also initiates funding lines for those being in the integration process. All such programmes are a significant factor vivifying mobility in the described region. One has to notice though, that simultaneously, joining or the will to join the EU has caused a visible set-back in East-East relations.

II. Mobility initiated by national public authorities in the CEE countries

Policies, strategies or programmes

Before looking into the actions undertaken to promote mobility one should realise how complex the situation is. On the one hand, mobility is not treated as separate field needing its own schemes, on the other, it is already recognised as an important element of cultural activity. In effect, it is more and more often interlaced by many entities with the already existing broad range of their activities.

Mobility as such, is not yet perceived as a field of cultural activity which needs to be treated as a whole and separately - as one does in relation to e.g. performing arts or cultural heritage. Even the term of "mobility" is not yet commonly used to cover all the aspects of the issue. Therefore mobility in the countries in question does not appear in the **main cultural policy priorities** as a separate matter. It is only when one looks closely into them, one can find among them elements of mobility incorporated into more general policy lines such as: promotion of national culture and artists abroad (e.g. Poland, Slovakia, Hungary); young artists' support (e.g. Hungary); broadening access of cultural offer (e.g. Ukraine); international co-operation (e.g. Slovenia), etc. The situation is similar when one looks at **cultural strategies** of the countries or cities. There also, mobility has not been recognised as a field needing unified and coherent outlines. For example, in Slovenia there is no comprehensive strategy for mobility but its elements are to be found within the framework of international cultural dialogue policies. In effect mobility in Central and Eastern European countries is addressed not through general state policy but is developed within various cultural disciplines or fields and on different levels of government. This is done through highly scattered programmes and measures.

In the region in question, there are hardly any examples of **publicly derived programmes or schemes addressing solely mobility**. Only a few exceptions are to be found - for example the Polish *Cultural and Scientific Cooperation Programme* run by the Ministry's of Culture and National Heritage. However, in general, mobility is mainly supported indirectly as an element of different programme lines by different public entities. The incentives take various forms – of scholarships, travel grants, exchange programmes, residencies, etc.

Shift of responsibilities – from foreign affairs to culture

The main responsibility for mobility support lies upon the ministries of culture and foreign affairs. At this point it has to be noted that in the region in question, due to the political transformations, one could observe, in the passing years, a tendency for **ministries of foreign affairs** to gradually withdraw from this responsibility and for the ministries of culture to overtake them. This is clearly visible on the example of Slovenia, where, in the past, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs mainly handled mobility. After joining the EU the Ministry of Culture became much more active in this field. The shift was caused by a need for more professional approach to the issue.³

Still of course some **embassies or national institutes** abroad are active in the field of mobility but to a much smaller extent. For example there are 18 Hungarian Cultural Institutes all over the world – most of which, among other activities, provide scholarships.⁴ The Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs realises its tasks in the field of international cultural co-operation through the Polish Institutes based in other countries,⁵ embassies and attachés (cultural and science attachés) and the departments of the Polish Academy of Science in Berlin, Paris, Rome and Vienna. They too provide scholarships for cultural workers.

Fields of central public authorities' activity where mobility is present

There are quite significant tendencies in the region regarding the kind of public authorities' activities, initiated within their own countries, to support mobility and regarding the fields of authorities' activity in which they appear. A clear tendency in the countries in question is that mobility serves as a tool of national promotion and as an important element of international co-operation.

In some countries mobility support appears in the context of **promotion of a country abroad** already on the level of policy priorities and/or strategies (as in e.g. Ukraine, Slovakia). In others, it appears as elements of the implemented programmes in this field. The best example of such programmes are the Days, Months or Years of Culture. State authorities in all the countries in question are very keen on sending their artists abroad on such occasions. This however is perceived as being a rather outmoded tool for supporting mobility.⁶ As all the

³ The funding for mobility in Slovenia is quite significant. In 2006, The Department for International Cultural Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, had a budget of 230 000 euros to promote Slovenian culture abroad (note that in case of Slovenia most of the actions are ones that we understand as mobility). The Ministry of Culture had double of this amount for the purpose. Altogether that makes 690 000 euro. Additionally public cultural institutions are to undertake such activities within their regular activities and therefore funds for that are included in their regular public funding.

⁴ Their activity seems to develop as In May 2006, the assistance and co-ordination of the content of the activities of the 18 institutes was allocated to the Balassi Institute (originally established for the co-ordination of Hungarian studies and for looking after students and lecturers who act in the framework of intergovernmental agreements).

⁵ Germany (Berlin, Düsseldorf, Lipsk), Slovakia (Bratislava), Hungary (Budapest), Romania (Bucharest), United Kingdom (London), France (Paris), Czech Republic (Prague), Italy (Rome), Bulgaria (Sofia), Sweden (Stockholm), Austria (Vienna), Lithuania (Vilnius), Israel (Tel Aviv), Russia (Moscow, St. Petersburg), Ukraine (Kiev), United States of America (New York).

⁶ Which originated from bilateral agreements.

other public authorities of the countries in question, the Ukrainian ones organise many events of this sort - for example the Year of Ukraine in Georgia (2007) organised by the two respective ministries of culture. It engaged music groups from both countries, the Theatre of Modern Choreography Constellation of Aniko, Ukrainian film-makers, Batumi State Chavchavadze Drama Theatre, and the Georgian Peoples' Film Centre. Nevertheless the next Ukrainian Year of Culture will be organised in a different place and will probably engage a similar group of artists.

Often the ministries issue special programs which aim to seek projects promoting their culture abroad. For example the Polish Operational Programme of the Ministry of Culture *Promotion of Polish Culture Abroad* or the Slovakian grant programme *Pro Slovakia*, which supports and funds mobility of artists and cultural workers, exports Slovak culture in order to present it abroad.

In general, perceiving mobility as a promotional tool for a country is common in the region. This illustrates that culture has become a desirable element of promotion – that the authorities realised that it is the best way to promote the country. On the other hand, for mobility itself, this tendency has some faults. It concentrates on strengthening the countries image by showing the national culture abroad, mainly by “displaying” it on various occasions, and sending those artists whose work promotes the country. It therefore singles out those whose art is representative for the country or those well established - those that can promote the country itself and not the originality of the artistic creation. Moreover such events usually concentrate on “exporting” rather than also inviting artists.

The second field of authorities’ activity within which mobility is clearly visible is **international cultural co-operation**. Here also mobility does not have special programmes addressing it. It is however present in nearly all grant lines and schemes devoted to cultural co-operation of different ministries (e.g. of culture, education, foreign affairs). Unlike the case of „using” mobility as a tool for country promotion, here mobility does not meet obstacles and restrains of a diplomatic character.

Also **other fields of authorities’ activity** sometimes embrace some mobility measures. These would be ones like intercultural dialogue, young artists’ support, amateur art support, etc. For example in Slovenia, in relation to the preparation of its EU Presidency, the government announced that supporting intercultural dialogue will be one of its priorities – mobility was an emphasized element.

Cultural institutions

In the region in question, the state authorities often delegate the task of supporting mobility to their **cultural institutions**. Thus, on this ground, the number and scope of measures is strongly enlarged. For example in Poland the minister of culture created a public cultural institution called the Book Institute, to which he passed the responsibility of promoting Polish literature and Polish editorship in the country and abroad.

Regional authorities

Regional authorities are in this field rather less active. Of course on the occasions of programmes such as Twin Towns, Cultural Capitals and other of the sort, mobility is supported. Another example is the Ukrainian programme for developing cross-frontier relations - “Days of Good Neighbourhood”. It supports intercultural dialogue activities between towns and villages, among others – mobility. Additionally, regional authorities sometimes set up studios in their cities, provide some limited scholarships and support touring. Still however the regional authorities support to mobility is rather low. The same can

be said in relation to local authorities (an exception are metropolitan areas). This is rather disappointing in the era of Europe of the Regions.

Regional authorities play however an important role in supporting mobility indirectly – they are the ones who issue the highest support to non-governmental organizations (NGO's) and those are the ones who are the most active to support and initiate mobility in the cultural sector.

Non-governmental organisations

As mentioned earlier, NGO's are the most active players as regards mobility. Many of them are established by artists and cultural workers, and for purposes like: international co-operation in the field of culture, exchange of good practices, or even supporting mobility of artists. What more, they are the ones who can profit from all kinds of funding sources - quite often public grants or EU grants are addressed to them and individual artists cannot apply. Additionally NGO's are the entities which most closely and most effectively cooperate with entities from other countries.

Due to the above, the NGO's are the most active “organisers” of mobility. One could multiply examples endlessly. Here are just a few:

- Association of Art Galleries: museum training courses (Ukraine);
- Bunker: organiser of the Mladi Levi Festival (Slovenia); and
- Villa Decius Association: “Homines Urbani” artist in residence programme (Poland).

III. Country by country overview – chosen examples from the field of mobility of cultural professionals

HUNGARY

Mobility shares its position with cross-border activities, such as: presenting Hungarian values to the wider world; presenting the outstanding values of world culture in Hungary; and providing assistance to Hungarians to cultivate their culture in neighbouring countries. Cultural diplomacy remains almost entirely dominated by the promotion and branding of Hungarian culture abroad. For example in 2005, the Government of the Republic of Hungary created a development programme for domestic popular music scene PANKKK. On its basis since 2005, funds are provided for pop and rock groups of the younger generation (mainly non professional). The groups receive grants for e.g. an exchange of concerts with selected foreign groups. Grants are given in various forms, also their size ranges from as little as 200 euro to 14 000 euro in 2007, when 25 groups received financial assistance for their first recordings, 85 groups won grants for holding concerts in their own areas, and 25 groups got funds for an exchange of concerts with a selected foreign groups. In the framework of the PANKKK programme the national association Music Export Hungary⁷ (MXH) was established, with the aim of promoting Hungarian pop, rock, metal, electro, underground, jazz, folk and world music on an international level. It is in charge of organising cultural seasons and other image building events abroad. On the one hand Music Export Hungary works as a public benefit organisation, on another has full professional independence.

Besides bilateral agreements mobility is supported through grants of the Ministry of Education and Culture (since the late 1950s). At present the grants and/or scholarships are addressed to artists, under 35 years old, in the fields of fine arts, photography, design, applied arts, art criticism, literature, play writing, composition, musicology, music criticism and musicianship. Four to ten people from each of those fields are awarded with a 1 to 3 years long grant or scholarship. Additionally, since 2004, 18 young Hungarian writers living in the neighbouring countries can receive grants each year in the field of literature. In 2006, the Minister for Education

⁷ MXH co-operates with many national music export offices in Europe (e.g. Music Export Denmark, Music Export Estonia, Finnish Music Export Office, Bureau Export / French Music Export Office, German Sounds /The German Export Music Office, British Music Information Centre, Lithuanian Music Information and Publishing Centre) and international organisations (e.g. European Music Office, International Association of Music Information Centres).

and Culture put special emphasis on organisation of large scale exhibitions from abroad (the Museum for Fine Arts - Szépművészeti Múzeum, plays significant role in this process). This trend will probably be sustained in the next years.

Another example is the European Youth Centre Budapest, a residential educational establishment of the Council of Europe. On the base of an agreement between the Hungarian State and the Council of Europe the Centre has a diplomatic status. The educational programme is based on international and multilateral activities. The European Youth Centre Budapest plays a significant role in the process of bringing together participants from all member states of Council of Europe as well as beyond. Volunteers, young people, professionals in youth work and non-formal education in general or co-workers at international, national, regional or local level are able to apply for training courses.

Most of the mainstream institutions (museums, galleries, theatres, and especially large festivals) have rich programmes of international exchange. As an example may serve the Sziget (Island) Festival. It is a rock festival for students on an island in the Danube, in Budapest, established in 1993. It has remained a private undertaking, and has become one of the largest meeting points of European young people. The festival receives a government subsidy, however the main source of income is from the box office. A good example of the activity which supports mobility are Trafó, the A38 ship and the MU theatre. They are very popular and well functioning spaces especially for innovative and experimental productions, both from Hungary and abroad.

An example of independent initiatives, supporting mobility of artists, is the Budapest Music Centre (BMC) established in 1996. It is financed from a number of public and private sources. Since its opening the main aim of the centre has been to present values of Hungarian music in its complexity and entirety. The company's objective is to actively participate in helping Hungarian music culture take the place it deserves in the world.

POLAND⁸

In Poland, public direct support for creative artists is quite limited. There is lack of measures which could provide financial support to young or emerging artists, to establish residential programmes or provide travel grants promoting transnational mobility. However, in 2003, several schemes promoting artists were initiated, in part due to funds generated from gambling (Gambling Act). For example in 2005, via the provisions in the *Law on the Lottery* about 27.76 million PLN (about 6.94 million euro⁹) were generated for nationwide and international artistic events of an educational nature.

Mobility of Polish cultural practitioners is usually an element of international cultural co-operation and promotion of Polish culture abroad.

International cultural co-operation falls under the authorities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and The Ministry of Culture National Heritage. Within the latter the responsibility falls into the competence of the Department of International Relations and the Department of Cultural Strategy and European Affairs. Additionally few other institutional actors in this field are active: the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of the Economy, other public institutions and organisations such as the Adam Mickiewicz Institute, the International Centre of Culture, the Book Institute, the Polish National Tourist Office, the Polish Film Institute, and the Polish Information and Foreign Investments Agency and private ones. As an example may serve the Ministry's of Culture and National Heritage programme, entitled: Cultural and Scientific Cooperation Programme – foreign scholarships addressed to artists and cultural workers from all fields under 35 years old.

The Ministry of Culture and National Heritage executes the special operational programme entitled: Promotion of Polish Culture Abroad¹⁰. It is devoted to the creation and promotion of a positive image of Poland in other countries through presentation of Polish culture, Polish creators' activities and work abroad. The programme is implemented by two national institutions: the Centre of International Cultural Cooperation – Adam Mickiewicz Institute in Warsaw and the International Cultural Centre in Cracow. The Adam Mickiewicz Institute is responsible for the programme entitled: Polish Culture in the World (in its framework following initiatives are organised: Polish Season in Russia, Polish Year in Ukraine etc.). It gives the opportunity to Polish artists and other cultural practitioners to take part in cultural events abroad at international concerts, festivals, exhibitions, competitions, artistic workshops, etc.

⁸ For the reason that co-author of this part of paper is also an author of the Polish Compendium profile some fragments in Poland's description are used from Compendium.

⁹ The average PLN/EUR exchange rate in 2005 = 4 (the Polish National Bank).

¹⁰ Until 2005 the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage conducted the cultural operational programme entitled *Promotion of Polish Culture* (in 2005 its budget amounted to 10.5 million PLN, about 2.6 million euro). In 2006 new operational programme was established *Promotion of Polish Culture Abroad* (in 2006 7 million PLN were allocated, about 1.8 million EUR). The average PLN/EUR exchange rate in 2006 = 3.89 (the Polish National Bank).

However the main motive of the government, in the case of Promotion of Polish Culture Abroad programme is not mobility of artists but promotion of the country abroad. Often the most important application restriction is that the financed project must promote Poland. In most cases only projects which aim at participating in international events are financed. Usually, these programmes do not include promotion of the individual artists, however, they give artists the opportunity to profit from a broader contact with foreign cultural professionals.

The scholarship programme of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, *Gaude Polonia*, is aimed at young (under 40 years old) artists, art critics, filmmakers, writers as well as translators of Polish literature from countries of Eastern Europe. Each six-month scholarship is 2000 PLN (about 530 euro¹¹) per month and covers accommodation costs in Poland and artistic training under the supervision of significant Polish artists. There is also a Polish government scholarship for foreign students, co-ordinated by the Ministry of Education, which supports international exchange in this area.

In Poland the most developed is the Artist in Residence scheme (there is still lack of residency network or one central supervising institution). Programmes in this field are conducted both by public institutions (e.g. Centre for Contemporary Art in Ujazdowski Castle) and non governmental organisations (e.g. Villa Decius Association). Other measures supporting mobility do not have a character of a scheme. For example, there is no particular market development programme, however Polish cultural practitioners may scout foreign market in the framework of other programmes, for example the operational programme "Project Development" (Polish Film Institute) gives film producers the opportunity to go abroad in order to scout unknown market.

The issue of mobility is also connected with interculturalism in arts and cultural education. Schools and universities which participate in European programmes like Socrates etc., have made a significant contribution to the process of modernisation of Polish education. Activities concerning multilingualism, tolerance etc., as well as creative actions related to such issues become more and more popular among students from all types of educational institutions. The growing popularity of intercultural activities facilitates and increases the possibilities of gaining financial, technical and content related support from various institutions. Polish participation in the programme's components - such as "Erasmus", "Comenius" and "Youth" - facilitates the participation of young people in various activities at the European level. In recent years, in particular, the exchange of students and academic professionals in the framework of the "Erasmus" programme has become a real tool for the encouragement of trans-national activities for young Polish people.

Apart from public support to mobility which is rather limited, non governmental organisations play a significant role in this field. Moreover, in some cases, they are more committed to the process of establishing partnerships with foreign institutions than with local governmental bodies. That facilitates mobility of artists and other cultural workers. One of the examples of the NOGs' activities in the field of supporting mobility is the Villa Decius Association. It conducts the *Homines Urbani*¹² artist in residence programme which is one of the biggest Polish residential projects for European writers. In the course of the project which takes place in Cracow, over 80 authors from Germany, Switzerland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Ukraine, Belarus and Poland have spent several months working creatively. At the same time, this project is one of the largest cultural pride of the city, becoming part of the idea of bringing closer European cultures. Poland, as a member of EU, invites residents from the member states who can freely cross borders as well as artists from the East, where the matter of passport and visa still present problems. Whilst in Cracow, the authors from different cultures as well as the artists from East and West of Europe, try to answer a question: whether from this cultural diversity emerges a shared project which could be named 'European identity' and what is its characteristic after blurring the borders. This example shows that mobility is often connected with intercultural dialogue. Here, as another example may serve the Pogrnicze (Borderland) Foundation, situated in Sejny (a small town near to the Lithuanian border) which provides various programmes (together with the Centre Borderland of Arts, Cultures and Nations) for students, artists, cultural activists etc. The Foundation is very interested in extending its projects that result in co-operation with European and world organisations involved in intercultural and trans-national issues. In June 2005, the Foundation Pogrnicze was one of the co-organisers of the 2nd Colloquium of Intercultural Dialogue which took place in Tbilisi, Georgia and gathered many specialists in cultural, social and religious affairs.

SLOVAKIA

It seems that in Slovakia the main player in the field of the mobility is the Ministry of Culture. It elaborated the *Programme Declaration of the Government of the Slovak Republic* for the period 2006 –2010. One of the most important strategic and conceptual tasks for this period is ensuring the presentation of Slovak culture and art abroad (draft conception submitted in June 2007). Moreover two of the main priorities of cultural policy were set up in Slovakia, namely effective presentation of Slovakia abroad and support for international cultural

¹¹ The average PLN/euro exchange rate in 2007=3,78 (the Polish National Bank).

¹² Description of the project prepared by Danuta Glondys, the Director of the Villa Decius Association.

exchanges. Mobility of artists and cultural professionals is held mainly in the framework of promoting Slovak culture abroad.

International cultural exchanges are mainly based on bilateral agreements. Such co-operation aims, among others, to develop mobility through support for cultural exchanges in all areas of culture and presentation of Slovak culture through representatives sent to international festivals, symposia and congresses. The Slovak Republic established several intergovernmental commissions for bilateral international co-operation. (e.g. the Slovak-Polish Intergovernmental Commission for Cross-border Cooperation)

Presentation of Slovakian culture abroad is done mainly through a special grant programme "Pro Slovakia" which has been launched by the Ministry of Culture. It is to support and fund mobility of artists and cultural workers, export Slovak culture, present Slovak cultural activity abroad and successful international cooperation projects¹³.

Additionally, three special Art Funds have been established - Literature Fund, Music Fund and Visual Arts Fund. They are public, non-profit institutions with self-governing administrations, which serve as a special tool for artists, interpreters and researchers in Slovak culture. The Art Funds provide e.g. scholarships, production grants, awards, loans and travel grants. Their financial resources come from: royalties for authors and performance artists (amounting 2%); for usage of free artistic works in entrepreneurial activities; from users of artistic works; and from manufacturers and importers of un-recorded media.

SLOVENIA

In Slovenia the term of international cultural co-operation is in practice understood as mobility – most of public authorities' actions under the category of international cultural co-operation are: international exchange of artists and other professionals, working scholarships, competitions, awards, and residency schemes.

Therefore mobility falls under the competence of The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, especially its Department for International Cultural Relations and the Ministry of Culture. As before joining the EU the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was much more active in this field, today the Ministry of Culture has much more responsibilities.

Enabling mobility within and outside the EU, especially in the fields of art, education and science, was one of the aims of the common and inter-ministerial co-operation, as a part of the national strategy for implementing the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue. In October 2007, the Ministry of Culture announced the major activities to be undertaken in the area of culture. One of them was to increase funds for visual arts and for scholarships (40 new scholarship holders annually) and artists residencies. In the first half of 2008, in preparation for its Presidency of the EU, the main issues were indicated by the government – again, mobility of artists was among them. Nevertheless Slovenia has not elaborated a coherent strategy addressing solely mobility.

One of the general aims of the National Programme for Culture 2004-2007 was to intensify the presence of Slovenian culture abroad and its enrichment with the achievements of worldwide cultures. In this context, specific objectives such as: presence of Slovenian culture in the European cultural space and internationally recognised cultural capitals through cultural exchange; preservation of cultural values, traditions and contents which connect countries with Slavic languages and encouragement of cultural exchanges and projects with these countries were mentioned.

Increasing funds for mobility, is not the only type of actions undertaken by the public authorities. For example, as in most other countries, the Ministry of Culture supports international events on its territory (e.g. the Biennial of Graphic Arts, BIO, the Biennial of Industrial Design, the Forma Viva Open Air Sculpture Collection in Maribor, and the European Triennial of Slovene Small Sculpture). It is also active in the field of publishing, supporting international activities such as book-fairs, exchanges, conferences. Moreover in 2005 the ministry granted about 55 working scholarships for writers, poets and translators. Another example is the Europe Lost and Found project lead over several years by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In its framework, the issue of mobility in education, cultures and life models in the relations between the Western Balkans and Europe is studied. Moreover, public authorities also expanded its care for mobility to outside Slovenia in order to expand the cultural hinterland to the wider European arena. For example fine artists are being sent to international studios in Paris. The Ministry of Culture has also acquired a studio in New York and a flat for artists in Berlin. The gallery space A+A was established in Madrid in the 1990s and ten years later transferred to Venice, where it functions as a site for the Venice Biennale as well as an exhibition space available for international projects. Freelance artists can apply for a residency at these locations on an annual basis. In addition, the Ministry provides financial support for the participation of artists in international events. The ministry also supports Slovene artists' touring

¹³ In 2007 for the grant programme Pro Slovakia the Ministry's budgeted was 20.7 million SKK (around 600 000 EUR). In comparison with funds devoted to support cultural activities abroad, 20 million SKK (around 585 000 EUR), Pro Slovakia programme has at its disposal a significant budget.

(at least 10 to 20 guest performances every year). There is however a tendency to reduce funds for this purpose. International platforms in the field of contemporary dance and theatre are also supported. Since 2003, the mobility of artists is supported through working stipends, competitions and awards, and residency schemes which are announced annually.

In 1996, the government established "Public Fund for Cultural Activities – JSKD". JSKD is a member of the European Culture Cooperation –EcuCo, a network of socio-cultural organisations and institutions. It enhances mobility of artists (professional or unprofessional), exchange of information, and co-operation among festivals through organising conferences and joint cultural events, such as exhibitions, festivals, etc.

The non governmental organisations are also an active player in the field of mobility. The most visible example is the Bunker – an NGO active on the international performing arts scene at a transnational level since 1997. One of its biggest projects is the annual Mladi Levi Festival¹⁴. Every year it hosts up to 15 foreign artists and/or groups, both emerging young artists and the well established ones. Bunker is also a member of international network Junge Hunde. During five years it was a recipient of funds from Culture 2000 what had an influence on all the members of the network. The funds enabled to finance educational training all across Europe, residencies, and organising accommodation. It also it made it possible to invest in emerging artists. Bunker is also a member of the Theorem Network. As a platform for a partnership it fosters on European level the collaboration in the performing arts. A special emphasis is put on exchange and co-operation between the "old", "new" and bordering EU countries.

UKRAINE

The main priority of public authorities in Ukraine is to promote the integration of Ukraine into the European and the global cultural context. On the state level the aim is being realised through participation and organisation of international festivals, exhibitions, seminars, artistic tours, days and years of culture, etc. The present government has defined the main priorities in the field of cultural development as: developing Ukrainian culture respectively to global integration trends by providing wider access to achievements of world culture and presenting national culture in the world context (development of supporting system for literary translations, support of Ukrainian artists participation in international actions). One of the Presidential Edicts from November 2005 proclaimed that ensuring the enrichment and development of culture and spiritual heritage of the Ukrainian society is one of the high-priority task of the Cabinet of Ministries. An advisory body by the President of Ukraine - The National Board for Cultural Affairs (NBCA) - was established. It elaborated, together with the Presidential Secretariat an operation plan "The Roadmap to the Programme for Enrichment and Development of Culture and Spiritual Heritage of the Ukrainian Society". On its basis the Days of Culture (Years and Months) in foreign cities are organised.

As in other countries responsibility for mobility are divided between several entities. In this way the Ministry for Families, Youth and Sport supports trans-national activities of young people, granting them necessary travel funds to participate in meetings and discussions abroad. Such activities also receive support from the Ministry of Science and Education which, for example supports participation of Ukrainians in training courses and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism which supports young artists' travel. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Ukraine, jointly in co-operation with the independent Centre "Democracy through Culture", carry out training and educational seminars. They are addressed to cultural practitioners as well as cultural administrators from different levels. Seminars are also organised, in the framework of the "Kyiv Initiative" programme for cultural branches which involve international experts and trainers. One of the priority tasks of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is "Task Six: Ukrainian Culture in the World. - Entering the World Civilisation Space". It aims at making Ukraine recognisable in the world, mainly by participation of artists and academics in international forums and movements.

In recent years, international cultural co-operation has a significant influence on mobility of cultural workers. As mentioned above, in this case responsibility has also been distributed on the central level between different agencies. The Ministry of Culture and Tourism is responsible for cultural events, exchanges, heritage, diaspora, minorities, cultural values, tours, intercultural dialogue, while the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for promotion and international relations. The Ministry for Families, Youth and Sport plays a significant role in the field of youth culture, intercultural dialogue and sport. Moreover, State Committee on Information Policy, TV and Radio Broadcasting is responsible for media, TV, books, advertisement and the Ministry of Education and Science for student culture and education. At the same time, regional or local authorities can develop international collaboration independently or with support from central governmental agencies e.g. organising artistic tours, festivals, conferences, etc.

¹⁴ In 2006 the festival's budget comprised from: one third - public funds; one third - international sources (British Council, AFAA, Open Society Institute, Institut Ramon Llull, Pro Helvetia, European Cultural Foundation); one third - sponsors, donors and volunteers.

The support for mobility is also present in the framework of governmental programmes to support trans-national intercultural dialogue activities. They are concentrated mainly in three fields: special programmes for developing cross-frontier relations, e.g., "days of good neighbourhood" among border towns or villages which are organised jointly in co-operation with local administrations; the development of culture and information centres in foreign countries to present Ukrainian culture; and support to specific groups: Crimean Tartars, Roma, etc.

Ukraine takes an active part on an official and non-official level in all cultural activities of the Black Sea countries. It includes meetings, festivals, as well as joint activities between countries from the region, such as Slavic Bazar in Vitebsk (Belarus) and Vilnius' Intellectuals Forum.

Although there is no coherent policy or strategy for mobility, there are some policy actions which indirectly influence mobility of artists. One of such is the 2003 Law on Touring Activities in Ukraine. It is to support national performers and their mobility by envisaging a 3% fee from tickets for touring activities of foreign performing artists or groups.

Exchange of artists and cultural workers is also supported by international foundations, e.g. in the summer of 2006, the Polish Institute in Ukraine and the Theatre L. Kurbas Centre in Kyiv organised a performance of the Polish theatre "Academy of Movement", with master classes given by Polish actors. In the summer of 2007, the Polish Institute and the Art Centre "Mystetsky Arsenal" organised an exhibition of performing art with the participation of Polish, Ukrainian and Belorussian artists.

NGO's are also active in the field of trans-national cultural co-operation and mobility. They actively co-operate with local authorities, sponsors, international foundations and realise many projects based on trans-national collaboration e.g. museum training courses (lead by Association of Art Galleries, with support of the Dutch programme Matra).

A good example of strengthening mobility is the Model 21: Cultural Transformers project (Co-operation Project of the Swiss Cultural Programme South-East Europe and Ukraine) led by Development Centre "Democracy through Culture"¹⁵. It provides a guidelines for cultural individuals, such as artists, local core groups of cultural managers, policy makers, as well as for local business communities and cultural organisations. It aims to become a meeting point for partnerships at different levels.

Commercial projects are also significant in the field of mobility development. For example during the IV International Art-Festival "Salt Symphony" (2007) concerts of Ukrainian, Austrian, and Turkish musicians and singers took place. This project was supported by the Austrian Embassy in Ukraine, Donetsk Regional Council, the President of Ukraine and several sponsors. Other examples of commercial projects are also, for example, tours of Ukrainian singers or artists abroad or seasons of B.Zholdak theatre (Ukrainian theatre) in Germany and the UK.

¹⁵ It is non-governmental organization founded in 2000. It receives support from international organisations, as well as from public authorities: Verhovna Rada of Ukraine Committee on Culture and Spiritual Heritage, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, local authorities. Often conducts programme in co-operation with above mentioned public entities.

IV. From the perspective of mobility beneficiaries

Although mobility is not perceived as an element of public authority activity needing coherent policy, strategies or separate programmes, measures supporting it, are present commonly. There is a wide range of possibilities for artists scattered over the cultural policy system of the countries in question. But that is just one side of the matter. There is however a different perspective to this – the one of those who want to benefit from those measures. And here several obstacles are to be found.

When it comes down to practice one realises that although the measures are numerous they are quite **limited as regards the number of people** it can embrace. For example the Hungarian government's PANKKK programme supported in 2007 only 25 groups (foreign exchanges concerts). The ministry of culture in Slovenia supports touring but only 10 to 20 guest performances profit from in yearly. It seems that either the measures have insufficient funds or are limited to narrow groups of artists.

Additionally, quite often, public authorities do not fully understand the specificity of mobility, and in effect, when issuing calls for proposals, address them only to organisations, leaving out individual artists or groups of artists not associated under a legal form. Artists are thus often discouraged by the necessity of going into **formal matters** and cease to apply.

There is also a clear problem with **information** dissemination and availability. In the countries in question rarely entities (such as departments of ministries, institutions, strong NGO's) providing comprehensive information on mobility incentives were found. If ones exist, they limit information to those concerning only their own activity. The situation is somewhat similar as regards the Internet. There are web sites on mobility (for example the Researcher's Mobility Portals), but they are very general, do not provide a wide scope of information and moreover they do not provide links to programmes one could apply for. What more, mobility is about travelling abroad – but a lot of information, especially provided by public entities, are given in national **languages** of countries initiating particular schemes. This leads us to another problem which are language barriers in general. The matter of expressing oneself in one's own language or a foreign one, in a foreign place, among other cultures, still seems to be an obstacle difficult to overcome in the Central and Eastern European countries.

Going abroad for professional purposes, is difficult for cultural workers from the region also for **economic reasons**. On the one hand, as mentioned earlier, the funds for travel grants, scholarships, etc., are usually quite low - often the grants are not even high enough to cover all trip expenses, not to mention modest leaving costs. Therefore there is a threat that going abroad will imply working professionally and at the same time "for money" – this usually, at least in case of artists, is difficult to combine. On the other hand, artists who are somehow recognised in their own country, when leaving it, often lose their position in their country and face the threat of having to build it up again after returning. The unstable art markets in countries in question, causes that leaving the country often means burning bridges.

Short summary

Due to political changes which accrued in the region, the situation of the countries is rather specific. It does not however mean that it is homogenous. One of the reasons can be that for example not all the countries are members of the EU.

Still however some tendencies, common for all the countries in question are visible:

- bilateral agreements still function in some countries and in a way influence mobility,
- multilateral agreements play a significant role in relation to mobility and are at present much more important than the bilateral ones – especially those of a regional character,
- mobility is not treated by public authorities as a separate issue but falls under other fields of authorities' activity,
- when mobility falls under country promotion, emphasis is put on sending own artists abroad, rather than on inviting them,
- schemes and programmes addressing solely mobility are very rare,
- measures supporting mobility are scattered within many different programmes,
- there is a diversification of measures and sources of mobility support,
- artists-in-residencies programmes are the most common,
- the real effects of public authorities' engagement in mobility promotion is rather low,
- beneficiaries face difficulties when looking for support measures and when applying for them.

Surprisingly when analysing the existing information on cultural professionals' mobility in the region, at first one has an impression that quite a lot of measures supporting it are to be found. But it seems that such an impression is rather illusive. When one looks closer, one can risk an opinion that the issue is recognised and appreciated, even important, but regardless the number of public measures, the overall picture of public authorities' support to mobility is that it is: underfunded, addressed to a limited recipients' group, focused on own artist' travels, incoherent and fragmented. In effect it seems that it is still far from sufficient. Therefore cultural workers are not necessarily willing and determined enough to travel. In the countries in question there is also a visible and positive tendency – public support to mobility is slightly increasing and it appears in more and more fields of the public authorities' activities.