

Mobility of Cultural Professionals from the UK, Ireland, Netherlands and Portugal

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1. Introduction

This paper seeks to indicate trends in the mobility of artists and other cultural professionals, as well as cultural organisations, based on the experience of four EU states: the Republic of Ireland, the Netherlands, Portugal and the United Kingdom. Policy developments and structural change in recent years will be identified and attention will be drawn to programmes that have emerged to support international contact and mobility. Although the emphasis is on mobility within the Europe of the 27 EU Member States and the EEA countries, some attention is also given to mobility schemes related to destinations beyond the EU and, indeed, beyond Europe to reflect trends in recent years. The information and analysis in the paper is based on desk research, email correspondence, phone discussions and the knowledge of the principal author and his collaborators.

2. Linkages between the countries

Although the four countries studied here are not an obvious geo-political group and only one border is shared, they do have connections historically and share some similarities to this day.

The Netherlands, Portugal and the UK, for example, were great sea-faring nations that developed global trading links and colonised countries across the world. One of the legacies of those former empires has been migration flows into the three countries from former colonies in the past 60 years.

Portugal is the UK's oldest ally and the first treaty between the two countries dates from 1373. The Netherlands has been both an ally and an adversary of the UK but, in 1689, gave England its monarch, William (Willem III) who ruled jointly with Queen Mary.

Until its creation as an independent state in 1922 (recognised by the British Government in 1925), Ireland was legally part of the United Kingdom, and the six northern counties of the island of Ireland that constitute Ulster, or Northern Ireland, remain part of the UK.

Traditionally, Portugal and Ireland have been countries of emigration because of poverty or, in the case of artists and intellectuals, to seek opportunities elsewhere. This has changed as both have benefited from EU funds and inward tourism. Today, cities in both are members of the so called Atlantic Arc Group of European Cities (along with the UK, France, Spain, and the Canary Islands).

The UK and Ireland are islands and Portugal shares with them a less obvious historical characteristic in as much as it has often behaved as if it were an island, because it “turned its back” on neighbour and historical rival Spain, which was regarded as a barrier to contact with the rest of mainland Europe. Such self-imposed isolation in Europe has changed in recent decades as a result of EU membership.

Cultural mobility linkages have grown between the four nations, but are strongest between the UK and Ireland and especially between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, as cross-border cultural co-operation has been encouraged by the respective Arts Councils and as a result of the Reconciliation and Peace programme instituted with EU funds.

3. *Brief Observations on the Term ‘Mobility’*

For the purposes of this paper, the term ‘mobility’ is interpreted as referring to the movement of cultural professionals and organisations from one country to another. There are a range of programmes in the countries examined that facilitate such mobility. However, few schemes specifically cite mobility as an explicit objective, though in many cases it might be an implicit outcome. Indeed, in a selective examination undertaken for this study of policy statements and support measures for international engagement available in the UK over the past decade, it was revealing to note that some did not mention mobility at all. In any case, to fund mobility or travel begs the questions: mobility FOR WHAT? Travel FOR WHAT? The intention is certainly not to support mobility for its own sake.

Artists often want to develop international contacts to present, market, display or facilitate critical debate about their work, so the principal purpose of many schemes is to support international engagement to develop, inform and extend their creative practice. Programme objectives, therefore, are much more likely to relate to: performing, exhibiting or showcasing work; attending events; making contacts and networking; professional training and capacity building; promotion and profiling; building partnerships for co-productions and joint exhibitions; research and exploration; comparing and sharing values through cross-cultural collaborations; market development; promoting diversity; cultural relations; cultural diplomacy and reciprocity; development assistance, etc. Schemes which promote professional development and training, for example, may enhance the capacity, profile and “attractiveness” of individuals and thus make them more internationally mobile, but this is often a consequence rather than a direct ambition of the programmes.

4. *Context, Recent Policy Shifts and Structural Change*

Ireland

Until 2005 the main instrument funded by the Irish government to support international activity was the Cultural Relations Committee, a non-statutory agency established by the Irish Government in 1949. However, support for international arts remained modest for many years and did not mirror the noticeable increase in support for the domestic arts, which began in the late 1990s in tune with the growth of the economy.

Moreover, as a small and, until the past two decades, relatively poor agrarian nation, Ireland has been a country of emigration. Talented writers and artists went to live in London, Paris or to the USA where there were greater artistic opportunities and/or an Irish diaspora. Concern to recognise and retain such creators was one of the reasons for government tax concessions and especially the introduction in 1979 of AOSDANA, an association of writers, composers and visual artists (but not interpretive artists such as actors or dancers) who receive a tax free stipend over five years to enable them to concentrate on their work.

Of course, Ireland has been host to a number of events of international importance, including the Dublin Theatre Festival, Galway Arts Festival and Wexford Opera Festival, but international engagement has not been high on the agenda of successive governments. Because of this, the Arts Council began to lead on stimulating international contacts at artistic, research and policy levels. In conjunction with the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the British Council, it set up an International Arts Desk in 1999 to provide information on opportunities for artists and arts organisations. The Irish Cultural Contact Point for EU cultural programmes has been hosted by the Arts Council since 1998. Yet there was still no

clear, co-ordinated policy for financing/ co-financing Irish participation in transnational, collaborative projects and co-productions etc.

In 2003, following the passage of the Arts Act, which redefined the objectives and structures of government support for the arts, the Irish Government instituted a review of international policy. This was intended, among other things, to define the most appropriate strategies and structures for the promotion of the arts in and beyond the Irish State; to provide guidelines demarcating the responsibilities of the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism and Department of Foreign Affairs, as well as reviewing the roles of the Cultural Relations Committee, Arts Council and other agencies in international work¹. The review also sought advice on how best to optimise the potential contribution to overseas arts promotion by Irish embassies. There was some public discourse at the time as the cultural and political climate seemed ready for change, though there was no obvious consensus on what form this might take, other than a recognition of the need for more money.

In the event, the Government established, in 2005, Culture Ireland to promote and advance the interests of Irish based arts internationally in succession to the Cultural Relations Committee. The role of Culture Ireland is to:

- Grant awards to Irish artists and arts organisations in response to applications for projects and initiatives with an international dimension;
- Fund and facilitate Irish participation in strategic international arts events;
- Manage special emblematic cultural and artistic events on behalf of the Minister for Arts, Sport, and Tourism;
- Advise the Minister on international arts affairs.

The Netherlands

Debates on International cultural policy tend to surface at intervals in the Netherlands, often around the time that a new four year cultural memorandum is being prepared by government. Some 20 years ago discussions were given impetus when the report *Culture without Borders* was published in 1987 by the Advisory Council on Government Policy². This argued that international cultural policy should serve principally to reinforce the international status of Dutch culture as part of overall cultural policy and that the objectives of cultural policy should be kept separate from those of foreign policy. The Advisory Council recommended that responsibility for international cultural policy should be transferred from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the then Ministry of Welfare, Health & Cultural Affairs and the Ministry of Education & Science. While recognising the need to distinguish between cultural and foreign policy aims, the Government chose not to adopt such a transfer of responsibilities. Nevertheless, a closer approach on international cultural policy between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the renamed Ministry of Education, Culture & Science had begun to evolve by the time of the publication, in 1992, of the policy document *International Cultural Relations*³. This acknowledged the shift of emphasis with the Foreign Ministry responsible for specific foreign policy aspects of international cultural co-operation and the Ministry of Culture focussed on cultural issues.

¹ International Intelligence on Culture, *International Cultural Compass*, No. 25/26, issue 8/9, 2003, London, p. 10-11.

² Advisory Council on Government Policy (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid), 1987, *Cultuur zonder grenzen*, The Hague.

³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1991-92, *Nota Internationale Culturele Betrekkingen*, Lower House of Parliament, 21637, No.3.

Three years later international cultural relations was again being examined as a part of a comprehensive review of foreign policy. A government memorandum on the subject acknowledged that foreign cultural policy and foreign policy are interdependent and mutually reinforcing and that cultural co-operation enhances the international profile of the Netherlands⁴. As a result, since 1997 international cultural policy and funds made available by government for this purpose have been the joint responsibility of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and of Education, Culture & Science. The Government then injected an additional Euro 7 million plus into the Netherlands Cultural Fund to stimulate international engagement. Culture is now regarded as the third pillar of foreign policy alongside politics and the economy.

Although the possibility of establishing national cultural institutes to represent Dutch culture and language abroad has surfaced as an issue on several occasions over the past 40 years, there has always been strong internal resistance to the Netherlands following the path of other Western European nations such as the UK, France, Germany and Spain.

Although a small country, the Netherlands has enjoyed quite a strong cultural profile internationally. There are historical reasons for this, not least the great visual arts tradition of the nation. Arguably, the reputation it has gained as one of the European focal points for cultural networking and mobility has been due to the active engagement of Dutch cultural practitioners in European initiatives. Other factors have also played their part. Europe's oldest foundation for promoting cultural co-operation, the European Cultural Foundation, has been based in Amsterdam since 1960. It had a particular interest in facilitating contact with artists and intellectuals in Central and Eastern Europe during the Cold War and continues to provide funds for European mobility, especially in South Eastern Europe and EU neighbourhood countries. A similar concern to provide a forum for the mobility of artists and intellectuals from Eastern and Central Europe, so they could freely exchange ideas with their Western European counterparts, was the basis for the creation of the informal Gulliver network during Amsterdam's year as European City of Culture 1987. Other networks, such as the European League of Institutes for the Arts (ELIA) and the European Conference of Promoters of New Music are among those also based in the Netherlands.

Despite this, there was a commonly held belief that too much emphasis was being given to the 'export' of Dutch culture at the expense of incoming arts. Consequently there was a shift in policy emphasis at the beginning of the New Millennium to portray the Netherlands as a "free port": a country with a rich culture which has traditionally welcomed international contacts and visits of practitioners from other nations. This was a time when new residency programmes for foreign practitioners were established and cultural organisations in general were encouraged to have an international outlook. However, some critics have suggested that perhaps there was some contradiction in instigating an international policy focussed on what the domestic scene could offer artists and cultural organisations of other nations. Nevertheless, the 'free port' concept, placed at the interface between domestic and international policy, was incorporated in the Government's principles of the four year Cultural Policy document for 2001-2004 (*Culture as Confrontation*)⁵.

By 2005, it was evident that the Government wanted to steer culture within the foreign policy framework more than it had previously, recognising that culture was important for the nation's image⁶. This has led to accusations of culture being instrumentalised.

⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1995, *De Herijking von het Buitenlands Beleid*, The Hague.

⁵ Ministry of Education, Culture & Science, 2000, *Cultuur als Confrontatie. Cultuurnota 2001-2004*, Zoetermeer.

⁶ Hoekema, Jan, *International exchange*, interview with the Ambassador for International Cultural Co-operation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in *International Arts Manager*, London, January 2006, Supplement p 9.

Today, the key objectives of the Netherlands's international cultural policy include:

- Strengthening the cultural infrastructure and promoting Dutch cultural activities abroad;
- Promoting the Netherlands as a meeting place of cultures (the 'free port concept');
- Strengthening the international cultural profile of the Netherlands⁷

One of the criticisms sometimes levelled against the Netherlands international policy is that it is, in reality, little more than an 'untidy' collection of programmes developed by civil servants to promote Dutch arts abroad⁸. Indeed, there is official acknowledgement that the Netherlands does not have a clear vision of what it wants its cultural policy to achieve in the European context⁹. A criticism which is more frequently levelled at Dutch policy, and not unconnected perhaps, is that policy delivery is constrained by the absence of a network of national cultural institutes. Cultural attachés in embassies are not seen by some Dutch critics as an adequate replacement for strategically placed institutes, allegedly because embassy staffs are too closely tied in their thinking to the interests of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs¹⁰.

Portugal

Portugal has undergone considerable social, cultural and demographic change, with massive emigration from the 1950s and a significant influx of people from its former colonies after the Revolution in the 1970s (as well as marked internal migration flows from rural areas to the cities).

It is not surprising that the geographical focus of international cultural policy (apart from EU nations) remains Portuguese speaking countries (Brazil, East Timor and five Sub-Saharan African Countries), given that only some 5% of the c 200 million people who speak Portuguese live in Portugal. This may account for the emphasis traditionally given in Portugal's international support measures to literature. Greater attention has been given in recent years to major nations outside Europe – the USA, Russia, India and China (though reality suggests interest in the latter is primarily aspirational except in relation to the former colony of Macao) – and several schemes are open for Portuguese engagement with any country¹¹.

Traditionally, the Gulbenkian Foundation has been a generous supporter of Portuguese culture, acting (in the absence of political will to provide resources) as a surrogate Ministry of Culture during the Salazar dictatorship and up until the beginning of the 1990s. It remains a significant source of finance for the arts, primarily within Portugal, but also supports international engagement.

In 1992 the government established the Camoes Institute as an instrument to promote Portuguese language and culture internationally and, by 1997; it had opened 12 centres

⁷ Dodd, Diane, Lykelma, Melle and Dittrich–Van Weringh, Kathinka, 2006, *A Cultural Component as an integral part of the EU's Foreign Policy?*, Amsterdam, Boekmanstudies.

⁸ Byvanck, Valentijn, 2005, *The Arts under a National Flag*, in *All that Dutch, International Cultural Politics*, NAI Publishers, Rotterdam, 14-18.

⁹ Raad voor Cultuur, 2007, *Innovate, participate! A cultural policy agenda for the Netherlands*, The Hague

¹⁰ Of course, having a national cultural institute is no guarantee of independence. The institutes of some countries act as though they are inextricably linked to their Foreign Ministry agenda.

¹¹ Martinho, Teresa Duarte from draft ERICarts questionnaire for Portugal and Veiga, Francisco Motta in Fisher, Rod, *A Cultural Dimension to EU's External Policies: from Policy Statements to Practice and Potential*, Boekmanstudies and Labforculture, Amsterdam, 2007, 118-119.

around the world. Today it is 19. However, from the outset it has suffered from insufficient resources to carry out its tasks effectively and this, argue some critics, has resulted in a lack of visibility. The Council of Europe expert group that evaluated Portuguese cultural policy observed in the recommendations of its report that:

“Strengthening Portugal’s contribution to international cultural development could be enriched by increasing significantly the resources of the Camoes Institute... thus demonstrating, not only symbolically, but very concretely, the will to give a cultural dimension to Portuguese influence beyond its borders”¹²

This recommendation does not appear to have been implemented. Moreover, budget restrictions in recent years have led to a depletion of Portuguese embassy staff, including cultural attaches¹³.

In 2003, following a merger of the Institute of Contemporary Art and the Portuguese Institute of the Performing Arts, the Ministry of Culture established the Instituto das Artes. “Internationalism” was defined as one of the new Institute’s priorities in its role to support all the arts and this included deciding which Portuguese artists would participate in the Venice Biennale. However, in 2006 the Instituto das Artes itself was reformed as the General Direction of the Arts in the Ministry.

The current trend in Portuguese cultural policy is to focus on decentralisation and internationalism. Hitherto, cultural professionals have been critical about the lack of a clear strategy and long term international cultural policies on the part of government and also what they regard as a lack of articulation between the responsible government departments¹⁴. Of course, the fact that there have been five governments and six ministers of culture in the past decade or so has had an impact on policy and resources¹⁵. It has led to the cessation of certain measures and the adoption of new ones, arguably before previous ones had been fully evaluated. However, rationalisation and structural reform of government departments, including those responsible for foreign cultural affairs, which commenced in 2006, may at least clarify responsibilities

A recent agreement between the General Direction of the Arts (of the Ministry of Culture) and the Camoes Institute (of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) seeks to target the internationalisation of artists and arts projects. This agreement aims to guarantee financial support for:

- the international participation of Portuguese artists and foreign artists resident in Portugal;
- foreign organisations, with international artistic recognition, to invite Portuguese artists/organisations to participate in international events.

By working together, the two Ministries aim is to guarantee support to those artistic projects that fall within their common scope. This agreement aims to contribute to regular information exchange on international projects, as well as allowing both institutions (Camoës Institute and General Direction of the Arts) to know and evaluate candidate initiatives and to jointly support them (thus representing enhanced financial assistance). Moreover, the exchange of information also seeks to avoid overlaps in grants and to reach a wider range of applicants.

¹² Petaux, Jean, 1998, *Cultural Policies in Portugal. Report of a Panel of European Examiners*, Strasbourg, Council of Europe.

¹³ Veiga in Fisher, op cit, 119.

¹⁴ Veiga in Fisher, op cit 124.

¹⁵ Martinho, op cit.

The General Direction of the Arts has enlarged its support to national projects leaving international support to its partnership with Camoes Institute. This separation of grants seeks to make the funding system clearer and simpler for applicants and thus address major criticisms about its complexity and lack of clarity.

The United Kingdom

In the 1980s, the main instrument for international engagement was the British Council, whose role was to present a range of UK culture overseas to enhance diplomatic efforts, strengthen cultural relations and promote the UK's image. The support would range from travel grants to selected artists and professionals to undertake research, establish contacts or exhibit their work, through to fully managed tours in countries where the management/promotional infrastructure was weak.

The task of Visiting Arts (now a fully independent organisation, but then hosted and funded by the British Council with support from the Arts Councils in the UK and the Crafts Council) was to provide modest support to UK presenters, producers, festivals, etc to bring to the UK the arts from other countries.

The Foreign & Commonwealth Office also maintained a discrete budget to assist the Government with reciprocal cultural visits or events, usually to fulfil bilateral cultural agreements when funding could not be found from other sources.

The Arts Council of Great Britain had introduced an International Initiatives Fund in the second half of the 1980s, because of what it regarded as the inadequate funds at the disposal of Visiting Arts. This was utilised to help bring to the UK performances or exhibitions of major cultural importance or ground-breaking work not seen in the UK before.

Some of the English Regional Arts Associations (later to be renamed Regional Arts Boards before they were integrated into Arts Council England as its regional offices) maintained very modest pockets of money to assist with the travel costs of arts practitioners to make contacts, network or see work in situ overseas.

At this time, subsidised theatre and dance companies and music ensembles etc were inhibited in making visits or undertaking tours overseas, because of the fact that they could not apply any of their Arts Council grants for work outside the UK. This was due in part to the historical convention that Arts Council funds were only to support the arts in Britain and to concerns not to impinge on what some policymakers considered to be the exclusive work of the British Council (though the British Council did not have the resources to meet the demand for such touring and, in any case, used its funds in ways which were primarily directed to cultural relations rather than artistic benefit). Thus arts organisations had to seek full cost recovery for such tours or engagements, either from the host country presenter, venue or festival or (in the case of major theatre, opera and dance companies or orchestras) with additional finance from business sponsorship. In the case of many theatre companies, such tours were only realistic if they were an extension of a domestic tour of a specific production and providing they did not have to incur additional costs for remounting and recasting it.

The National Arts & Media Strategy in 1992 identified 'international' as one of the seven priorities for the Arts Council of Great Britain, but within a year or so it had fallen off the

agenda and the Arts Council's International Affairs Unit had been outsourced¹⁶. It was to be another decade before 'international' was to be seen as a priority.

By the beginning of the New Millennium, all the work done in raising the cultural sector's awareness of international opportunities – first by the Arts Council of Great Britain at the beginning of the 1990s and carried on for the Council by the International Arts Bureau and its successor International Intelligence on Culture, as well as by Euclid, the Cultural Contact Point, had stimulated considerable interest and demand for UK practitioners to engage with their counterparts in Europe, but was being frustrated by a lack of UK measures to support this and too much reliance on the EU cultural programmes. It had not been helped by the Arts Council of England's decision to abolish the International Initiatives Fund in the mid 1990s, and by the constrained budgets of the British Council and Visiting Arts. Only in Wales, with the creation of Wales Arts International by Arts Council Wales and the British Council Wales, and in some English Regional Arts Boards was there recognition that support for the international mobility of UK based practitioners was important.

Several factors were influential in driving 'internationalism' back up the policy agenda. Not long after a New Labour Government was elected in 1997 it instigated a process of partial devolution of political responsibility to Scotland and a degree of autonomy to Wales. Culture was seen as an important function in both countries as part of strengthening their identity within the UK and the wider world.

In 1998 the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport announced the Government's intentions of increasing its support for culture in England, but this was tied to organisational change in the national bodies responsible for culture, and delivery of the Government's agenda to combat social exclusion. The impact of significantly increased government funding for culture (primarily for England) was not to be felt until the early years of the New Millennium, though the introduction of the National Lottery by the previous Conservative Government was already bringing in major new funds for the arts – £1.8 billion between 1995-2004 – primarily directed to the cultural building infrastructure.

The importance of creativity and innovation on the political agenda was also a key factor in greater recognition of the importance of the international dimension. The creative and cultural industries had been identified as major contributors to a knowledge-based society and to the UK economy and employment and their export was encouraged by Government.

This was a period of considerable organisational change – nowhere more so than at Arts Council England, created in 1994 from the former Arts Council of Great Britain, which has spent much of the time since then endlessly tinkering with its structure, staffing and policies, whether of its own volition or as a result of pressure from the Government.

Arts Council England published its first *International Policy* in 2005. This indicated it would support international work by:

- establishing strategic partnerships in the UK and overseas;
- being strong advocates for the value of international working;
- enabling critical debate;
- working with others to share information and intelligence; and
- supporting capacity building within the arts sector and its own organisation.

¹⁶ The National Arts & Media Strategy, led by the Arts Council of Great Britain, was the first comprehensive examination of the state of the arts and media in the UK and their future policy direction. It was never repeated.

Significantly, the policy stated that an element of Arts Council funding for its subsidised organisations could now be used to support work and development outside England. Moreover, ‘internationalism’ is one of the Council’s priorities for 2006-2008.

In 2006 the Scottish Arts Council and British Council Scotland issued an *International Arts Strategy* that seeks, among other ambitions, to: enable Scottish based artists to develop an international perspective and work internationally; develop and sustain networks and relationships between Scottish practitioners in all arts sectors and their international counterparts; and provide Scottish communities with greater access to high quality international arts.

The British Council has also been reviewing its policies and structures, especially in the light of a major review of public diplomacy by a Governmental Committee chaired by Lord Carter. Conducted in 2004/05, Lord Carter’s review resulted in the creation of a new Public Diplomacy Board in 2006 to ensure greater cohesion, effectiveness and impact of government efforts to promote UK interests internationally. The arts and creative practice is said to be vital in delivering the Council’s cultural relations agenda.

Recently, however, the British Council has been involved in a rather acrimonious cultural sector and media controversy over proposals to develop a new strategy and reorganise its Arts Division. There were concerns (internally and externally) that, unlike other aspects of the Council’s work, the Arts Division had failed to respond adequately to the changing cultural, political, economic and global environment. The proposals put forward by a new Director of Arts, with their greater emphasis on cultural relations outcomes, were portrayed in the media as a threat to the Council’s work and staff. Some, including the Director, alleged that misleading information was leaked to the media in an attempt to obstruct change. Whatever the truth of this, it is difficult to escape the impression that the Director’s position was undermined by existing staff concerned about the direction of the strategy and their own jobs. Following expressions of concern by a number of celebrated artists, the Director indicated her intention to resign. Faced with a crisis of confidence in its work, the Council launched details of its intentions in a consultative document in February 2008. Key proposals are:

- helping to showcase the best UK arts talent ‘to take their work to the world’ and supporting the commissioning and touring of work that explores diversity, innovation and excellence;
- increasing opportunities for collaborations in which UK artists would work overseas and their counterparts in other countries would come to the UK; as well as partnering UK cultural organisations in building international opportunities, understanding and connections;
- developing existing multilateral networks and helping to create new ones in a global creative economy, and increasing opportunities for exchange, skills development and dialogue between artists, entrepreneurs and policymakers¹⁷.

Significantly, an integrated cultural relations approach is proposed in which the Council would move from major multi-country arts programmes to working collaboratively across the Organisation’s different sectoral interests – arts, education, science and language – thus overcoming perceived limitations imposed by single discipline projects and, at the same time, reaching a larger number of people.

¹⁷ British Council, 2008, *British Council Arts Strategy: Connecting the UK with the World through Culture*, www.britishcouncil.org/arts

During the consultation process, it was frequently made clear that there was a lack of clarity about the Council's cultural relations work and that a proposed new strategy should not be developed in isolation from the arts sector. There were also concerns about any proposals to restructure the Arts Division. Other issues raised often were:

- the essential development and maintenance of specialist British Council expertise in the arts and creative economy, both in the UK and overseas so as to provide the latest market intelligence and build long term relationships;
- the strategic objectives and internal processes of the Council should not inhibit the artistic and creative process;
- decision-making needs to be quicker and more transparent;
- A proposed emphasis on the Council supporting larger global projects should not lead to a reduction in support of smaller initiatives.

Whether or not the strength and diversity of opinions expressed during the consultation process surprised the Council, the apologetic nature of the *Action Plan for the Arts* which resulted is certainly unusual. Acknowledging “grave” concerns over its work, the Council commits to “redressing the decline in the quantity” of its arts and creative economy work over recent years¹⁸. This it proposes to do by maintaining all its arts functions and adding a new media function, re-establishing an external advisory function for the arts and appointing an external consultant to work with the Council to refine how it selects and develops content for its work globally. Significantly, the Council indicates its arts budget will be restored to GB £ 30 million (from GB £ 20 million) over three years.

5. *Authorities Responsible for Support Measures*

Although central government is the principal generator of international policy and funding in the Netherlands, quasi- public sector specific foundations play an important role, especially in the support of individuals. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Education, Culture and Science jointly administer the Homogene Groep Internationale Samenwerking (HGIS), usually known as the Netherlands Cultural Fund, which is the main instrument of Government to finance international activity.

Sector specific foundations first appeared in the Netherlands in the 1980s, when the Creative Arts (Funds) Act 1981 authorised the creation of new government initiated and financed funds for the arts. New legislation in 1993 – the Cultural Policy (Special Purpose Funding) Act – empowered government to establish semi-public funds for any area of cultural policy, and maintained the principle of Parliament voting each fund a sum of money, but leaving the management of the funds (or foundations as they are often known) to determine how to allocate the monies¹⁹. The Mondriaan Foundation is one of the key players supporting international work, but other “arms-length” funds active in encouraging international engagement and mobility include the Netherlands Foundation for Visual Arts, Design and Architecture, the Dutch Foundation for Literature and the Foundation for the Production and Translation of Dutch Literature.

Mention should also be made of the Stichting Internationale Culturele Activiteiten (Service Centre for International Cultural Activities) (SICA) set up with government assistance in 1999 to provide information and advice and help co-ordinate the initiatives of Dutch cultural

¹⁸ British Council, 2008, *Action Plan for the Arts*, www.britishcouncil.org/arts

¹⁹ Ministry of Education, Culture & Science, 2003, *Cultural Policy in the Netherlands*, The Hague

organisations abroad. SICA also organises international cultural events and is the Netherlands Culture Contact Point for EU cultural programmes. It manages Offshore, the most comprehensive database on Dutch cultural activities globally.

In Portugal the key players in developing international cultural policy are the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and its operational department the Instituto Camões, and the Ministry of Culture (primarily through the Office of International Cultural Relations), who share joint responsibility for defining external cultural policy and funding actions. However, it is foundations – notably the Gulbenkian (active internationally), Luso-American (active in the USA), Oriente (active in Asia), Carmona e Costa and Serralves – who play a more active role in financing international engagement and mobility especially for individuals (1). The performer’s rights organisation Gestao dos Direitos dos Artistas, Interpretes u Executantes (GDA) also supports residencies, workshops and programmes in other countries.

Central government is responsible in both the UK and the Republic of Ireland for setting overall frameworks for international policy, cultural co-operation and cultural relations (including at EU level), but the key players that support international engagement and mobility in both countries are quasi-autonomous public bodies. The two government departments in the UK with a particular interest in international cultural matters are the Department of Culture, Media & Sport and the Foreign & Commonwealth Office. Their counterparts in Ireland with similar interests are the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism and the Department of Foreign Affairs. However, the principal UK channels of encouragement and support are the British Council and the Arts Councils of the four nations (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) and, in the case of Wales specifically, Wales Arts International which is jointly funded by Arts Council Wales and the British Council. The British Council’s income in 2006/07 was GB £ 551 million, of which 64.6% was derived from fees, teaching and contract income. The arts represented a relatively small component of the total at GB £20 million. In Ireland the main players are Culture Ireland – a funding agency and advisory body to government – and the Arts Council, which can provide financial assistance for the professional development and international networking of artists.

Unlike the UK and Portugal, neither the Republic of Ireland, nor the Netherlands have dedicated national cultural institutes to promote their culture and language.

6. *Observable Trends and Concerns*

In identifying trends and issues about support for mobility it is evident that some were common to several countries examined, while others appear to be specific to one.

The UK has witnessed the most significant growth in number and range of support measures, with an accompanying increase in financial resources. There are several factors that account for this. First the elaboration of new and review of existing international policies and strategies on the part of government departments and quasi-public agencies. Secondly, the importance attached by the Government to the promotion and export of the UK creative industries as part of a knowledge economy and, related to this, the need to develop capacity and skills in practitioners to achieve this. Third, the priority given to promote the UK’s cultural diversity internationally and the desirability to support the professional development of UK professionals of African, Caribbean and Asian origin as part of them. Finally, the British Council and the Foreign & Commonwealth Office have been anxious to “mend fences” through cultural relations with Moslem countries and communities around the world to redress the damage caused to the UK’s reputation by its involvement in the Iraq war.

Funds for international engagement have grown in Ireland too, following the creation by the Government of a new instrument, Culture Ireland, designed to respond flexibly to applications and ideas (though not with the range of different schemes to be found now in the UK).

The picture is not as good in the Netherlands and Portugal. Although there is a diverse range of support mechanisms in the Netherlands for international engagement, the main government fund, the HGIS, has diminished in real terms. In Portugal, while there has been a greater interest politically in international engagement and, at the level of cultural professionals, in mobility and collaboration, resources have neither corresponded with political ambitions, nor with practitioner demand.

Notwithstanding resource constraints, international collaboration appear to be increasing in all the countries, eg in Portugal there is an emerging trend for national organisations and training schools to invite foreign counterparts – primarily in dance and multidisciplinary art – to co-operate and share experience in projects.

The creation of Culture Ireland has made a considerable difference by:

- Injecting significantly more money into support for international work;
- Introducing a funding process to applications for grants which is straightforward , has four deadlines a year and where decision-making is relatively quick;
- Being visible through its website;
- Being less focussed on export and more open to reciprocity;
- Supporting networking, and thus the mobility, of cultural practitioners.

Not everyone is happy, however. A recent article in *CIRCA*, the Irish magazine for contemporary visual arts, alleged a lack of transparency in decision making, lamenting the fact that since its inception in 2005, Culture Ireland had given 12.53% of funding to international initiatives for the visual arts, compared with 41.35% for theatre and dance and 27.36% for music²⁰. Such figures are not that surprising, of course, as the performing arts always tend to command a greater proportion of funding whether the work is international or domestic.

On the other hand, the division of responsibility between Culture Ireland and the Arts Council appears reasonably clear, with the focus of the former on presentation, e.g. short-term exhibitions and performances; while the Council supports international activity and mobility when it is designed to enhance the professional development and training of practitioners. A memorandum of understanding between the two bodies has been agreed to ensure there is no confusion or duplication of effort and the Chief Executive of the Council sits on the Culture Ireland board.

Memoranda of understanding on international roles and responsibilities have also been signed by the Arts Councils in England, Scotland and Wales with the British Council. Furthermore, the co-operation between the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Sciences and Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the administration of the Netherlands Cultural Fund, together with the more recent agreement to co-operate between the Portuguese Ministries of Culture and of Foreign Affairs, via the General Direction of the Arts and Camoes Institute respectively, suggest a greater recognition of the importance of collaboration for policy delivery.

²⁰ CIRCA, 27/05/08, www.recirca.com/artnews/603.shtml

Some imbalance is evident in all the countries between the number of schemes and amount of resources provided for nationals to engage internationally, compared with those available for foreign professionals and arts organisations to visit the four countries studied. The British Council has introduced an innovative programme, the International Young Creative Entrepreneur Awards, that introduces entrepreneurs from emerging economies (including nine European countries so far) to the UK cultural and creative sector, and this, along with other measures, has begun to address the issue. However, it seems that this is a policy reality (and perhaps an understandable one) in most, if not all, European countries.

There has been an increase in mobility measures that are designed to enhance capacity and promote professional development. This is most noticeable in the UK, where there has been a particular emphasis on, and investment in, cultural leadership training and building capacity among British practitioners of African, Caribbean and Asian origins.

The British Council has indicated its intention to launch a seven year International Cultural Leadership Programme with partners in Europe, North America and the Middle East. Presumably, this will complement existing initiatives such as the Young Entrepreneurs Awards and Arts Council England similarly named Leadership scheme.

An increasing number of support schemes are focused on countries outside Europe. Interest in China and India is growing to various degrees in the countries examined, especially the UK – not unconnected, of course, with their political and economical importance as far as government is concerned, as well as curiosity on the part of artists. However, concern has been expressed by some practitioners in the UK that this extra-European focus should not be to the detriment of those artists/arts organisations more engaged with Europe.

It is also interesting to note that a significant number of schemes leave open to applicants the choice of country/countries they wish to visit,

Irish participation in the Culture 2000 programme remains problematic despite the extensive information now available through the Cultural Contact Point at the Arts Council. Small cultural organisations still regard the programme as too big a financial risk to get involved. Many have very small staffing resources, but even prominent and better resourced cultural organisations do not consider they have the capacity to lead or co-organise Culture 2000 projects. Moreover, many are not yet sufficiently networked into what's going on elsewhere in Europe²¹.

Practitioners in Portugal also acknowledge their relative lack of visibility in European networks and programmes such as Culture 2000 and blame this on a lack of capacity and technical assistance and inadequate information resulting in, for example, difficulties in finding project partners elsewhere in Europe. This was confirmed by an evaluation of Portuguese cultural operators in the Culture 2000 programme undertaken by the Observatory of Cultural Affairs²². Another recent study by the same Observatory identifies two further factors as problematic for the mobility of Portuguese professionals:

- The lack of support to Portuguese performing arts productions to tour internationally;
- The lack of sustainability of Portuguese cultural organisations and practitioners in international events²³.

²¹ Arts Council, *European Cultural Co-operation*, policy paper (2005), Dublin.

²² Observatorio das Actividades Culturais, 2003, (add Portuguese Title).

²³ Observatorio das Actividades Culturais (2005), *Contributions for public policies towards 2013 on the theme: cultural identities and heritage*.

Some practitioners, especially in the visual arts, consider that Dutch artists and curators are less visible in international biennials and art fairs than they once were. Moreover, critics in both the visual and performing arts sectors are concerned that major creators elsewhere in Europe seem less interested in visiting the Netherlands than before²⁴. If that really is the case, could it be because the Dutch cultural scene is perceived as being less ‘cutting edge’ than it was a couple of decades ago? Or could it be other factors that act as impediments to the concept of the Netherlands as a ‘free port’ for culture? For instance, the Culture Council has been critical of domestic licensing and tax regulations, which it claims discourage foreign artists and creators from establishing themselves in the Netherlands²⁵.

There are even suggestions that Dutch practitioners themselves are becoming more insular and losing their curiosity about what is happening elsewhere in Europe and beyond²⁶. Of course, such views are anecdotal, rather than based on research findings, but they do appear to be shared by an increasing number of people inside and outside the country.

Breaking into international markets remains a problem for Portuguese cultural professionals and is not helped by what they regard as insufficient government measures to assist them²⁷. Consequently, a growing number gravitate to other countries and cultures – Berlin, Paris and New York are especially favoured (arguably, this emigration enriches the cultural environment of these places). On the other hand, Portugal is regarded by some cultural practitioners in former Portuguese colonies as an entrée to possible engagement with, and mobility in, other EU countries.

It is difficult to escape the impression that a root cause of these complaints in Portugal is the limitations to the budget. Nevertheless, a new initiative launched by the Portuguese Government in 2008 could enhance the mobility of young cultural practitioners. Known as InovArt, this programme’s aim is to support up to 200 international internships annually for young cultural workers under 35 years of age to engage internationally and integrate professionally. Internships are intended to provide experience and training²⁸. They can last for nine months and take place in public or private organisations in the countries of the applicant’s choice. They can include any artform or creative industry and grants have a ceiling of Euro 25,000. InovArt is based on another successful programme of international internships in trade and innovation – the InovContacto Programme – promoted by the Ministry of Economy and Innovation with support from the EU among others. This link with the latter Ministry is significant and, taken in conjunction with Ministry of Culture (General Direction of the Arts) collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Camoës Institute), it may help a little to overcome the lack of resources which, traditionally, has been an obstacle to the implementation of new policies in the Portuguese cultural sector.

It is interesting to note the growth in the number of international residencies/studios in the Netherlands for foreign artists²⁹. An outcome perhaps of the ‘free port’ policy? A number of these are independent artist-led initiatives, while others are increasingly initiated by museums and other established organisations. Universities are also active in hosting residencies, increasingly referred to as researcher-in-residence.

²⁴ Demeester, Ann and Hlavajova, Maria, *Visionary Netherlands: Note on the Dutch International Paradox* and Simons, Johan, interview by Witman, Bob *Important International Performances Twice a Month in All that Dutch*, op.cit., 97-101, 105-107.

²⁵ Raad voor Cultuur, 2007, op.cit.

²⁶ Nelso, Alida, interviewed by Witman, Bob, *Always a Free Port* in *All that Dutch*, op.cit., 112-114.

²⁷ Martinho, op. cit.

²⁸ This scheme is one of the case studies in this project.

²⁹ Hamersveld, Ineke van, Netherlands questionnaire response for ERICarts study.

Arguably, residencies in Ireland are somewhat under-developed (Culture Ireland is more likely to be responsive to applications for residencies which have an exhibition or performance component, and although the Arts Council is supportive of process based residencies, resources for this are limited). Another gap in provision is financial assistance to bring to Ireland artists from Europe and beyond for R & D visits.

Visa problems were identified in the UK as a potential problem for extra-European cultural professionals. At the heart of the UK Government's strategy for delivering its objectives has been the notion of 'joined-up government', i.e. that coherence and consistency in policymaking is best achieved by cross-departmental co-ordination. Such arrangements are crucial not simply to deliver cross-cutting objectives, such as social cohesion, but also to ensure sector-specific issues are not overlooked. Unfortunately the policy practice has not always matched the political rhetoric. A recent example concerning visas illustrates this well. Two years ago, the Government Home Office proposed to increase the price of work permit visas by more than 100% (from GB £ 85 to GB £ 200) and work permits from GB £ 153 to GB £ 190. This would have had a detrimental effect on inward visits of non EU artists, curators, performers, etc. Although the extent of the increase was subsequently modified following lobbying by the cultural sector, new concerns arose over plans by the Home Office to switch to a Points Based System (PBS) for immigration. The plans were drawn up apparently oblivious to the potentially damaging impact they would have had on artists coming to the UK from around the world and requiring visas/work permits. The proposals could have resulted in thousands of artists and creative people intending to make temporary visits or to tour the UK being brought into the immigration system for the first time. Following lobbying by the National Campaign for the Arts, the Home Office has since indicated that individual creative workers who are currently non-visa nationals (those from the USA or Canada for example) and who are planning visits of less than three months will not need visas after all (though a sponsor - host venue, gallery, festival, etc. - will be required). However, short notice visa applicants, especially if they live a long way from capital cities, are likely to encounter difficulties, not least because future procedures will require applicants to apply in person to their British Embassy or Consulate for fingerprinting as part of the introduction of bio-metric information.

Two of the countries examined – the UK and Portugal – have a network of national cultural institutes, though the breadth and resources applied to the long established British Council far outweigh those of the Camoes Institute. Both the Netherlands and Ireland have chosen to use cultural attachés in their embassies to fulfil a roughly similar role instead (in the case of Ireland even to the extent of considering appointing arts practitioners to those roles). Whether these are appropriate alternatives is not for discussion here. However, it is worth observing that one advantage of cultural institutes is that an effective director posted abroad or locally recruited arts officer can often play a very important role in recommending what artists/arts organisations are 'marketable' or most appropriate to support for international visits.

Hitherto, support measures for international mobility have tended to regard such engagement as an extra, rather than a natural extension of an artist's or arts organisation's work. Therefore, it is hardly surprising that funding for international contact is relatively small as a percentage of total arts spend in all the countries examined. So, in some ways, it is refreshing to see Arts Council England state that 'We recognise international is a state of mind and while travel is no longer a prerequisite for international thinking, artists have long been pioneers when it comes to crossing borders'³⁰. However, despite evidence of moves to reflect these sentiments in grant schemes for artists in the UK it is doubtful whether support for international work has been truly integrated yet with domestic work in any of the four countries studied.

³⁰ Arts Council England, 2005, *International Policy*, London.

7. *Scope of Mobility Measures*

Ireland

The nature of support from Culture Ireland may take the form of travel assistance to visual artists and the transport of their artwork, or travel aid for Irish authors to read their work overseas, or to assist film-makers presenting films abroad. Financial assistance may also be provided to enable professional theatre and dance companies, or music ensembles to tour overseas. In addition, funds can be provided towards the costs of inward visits to Ireland by international artists and arts organisations. Key criteria for support include the quality of the work, the financial viability of the initiative, the potential impact overseas and the extent to which applications fit Culture Ireland's *Strategy 2006-2010*. This states that Culture Ireland will:

- Provide a flexible range of international funding;
- Support Irish participation in key international showcases, festivals and promotional events (and invite leading international programmers and presenters to Ireland);
- Develop and enhance promotion, information and research resources (including partnership with the Arts Council to invest in an online international arts database);
- Strengthen Ireland's cultural networks abroad (including the feasibility of engaging Irish arts professionals as cultural attachés in Irish embassies);
- Advise the Minister and co-ordinate (actions) with other stakeholders across government (including the Arts Council in relation to funding programmes);
- Strengthen cultural relations with Northern Ireland and with Britain;
- Encourage diverse cultural communities in Ireland to participate in International artistic exchange;
- Explore issues of European cultural identity, diversity and commonality
- Contribute to intercultural dialogue³¹

The budget for 2008 is Euros 4 million.

The Arts Council provides grants for travel and mobility to further the professional development and training of arts professionals. Support is also provided for an artist fellowship in New York and a residency in Banff, Canada. In addition, the Council provides core funding for the recently established Theatre Institute, which is engaged in a programme of international projects, e.g. festivals, seminars and networking. The Ireland Literature Exchange provides support for a small number of international visits and residencies for publishers (mostly outward), and it is funded by the Arts Council to do this.

There are few other sources of international funding for cultural professionals, with the exception of the Cultural Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs (which is responsible for intergovernmental cultural agreements, but also has a budget for exhibitions, concerts and readings at Irish embassies, or for emblematic events, such as residencies for Irish professionals in Asian countries as part of the 2006 Beckett Contemporary Festival). However, some local authorities co-finance Irish participation in international projects. Events such as Cork's celebrations as European Capital of Culture 2005 demonstrated both a civic commitment to support international initiatives and a demand by artists to work internationally. They can also leave a legacy, as is the case with the Cork Printmakers International Residency Award and the Cork Printmakers International Residency for Visiting Artists.

³¹ Culture Ireland Strategy 2006-2010, March 2006.

The Netherlands

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Education, Culture & Science jointly administer HGIS (Homogene Groep Internationale Samenwerking), the Government's main instrument to support international activity. 50% of HGIS is used to fund mobility schemes or to finance (up to a maximum of Euros 150,000). international festivals or events which fall outside the normal programme of Dutch cultural organisations. The remaining 50% of the Fund is used by the Ministries to help finance major international projects seeking sums in excess of the Euro 150,000 ceiling, or are applied directly by the Ministry of Education, Culture & Science for specific initiatives. Approximately three-quarters of the Euro 16 million budget for 2006 was allocated to 'export' Dutch arts to other countries³². The budget in 2007 was over Euro 20 million, but this had fallen by about 25% in 2008 and suggested figures for 2009-2012 show only fractional increases.

The Mondriaan Foundation is an important source of funds for international initiatives in the fields of visual arts, design and museums, allocating more than Euros 2,2 million for exhibitions and presentations abroad in 2007. It provided an additional Euros 306,000 the same year for artists and curators to participate in international art fairs. The Foundation also co-operates with Hivos and the DOEN Foundation in providing financial assistance, through the *Arts Collaboratory Scheme*, for inward visual arts initiatives from Africa, Asia and South America (its particular focus is to support the networking of artists, curators, etc. from those continents with their Dutch counterparts). Among other networking initiatives involving the Mondriaan Foundation is its *International Visitors Programme* that introduces foreign curators, critics, etc. to developments in the Dutch visual arts and design scene.

The Netherlands Foundation for Visual Arts, Design and Architecture organises study trips every three years to specific countries and regions in and beyond Europe for artists, designers, architects and curators whose work demonstrates an affinity with public space. It also runs a *Foreign Studio Programme* to support Dutch creators at a certain stage in their career to take up short term artist residencies.

The organisation BUMA Cultuur (a foundation dedicated to the promotion and support of Dutch music copyright) responsible for the collection of mechanical reproduction rights) and the Music Centre of Netherlands offer an interesting promotional and marketing scheme, *Music Xport*, to enable Dutch contemporary pop musicians and bands to perform in or tour to another country.

The Dutch Foundation for Literature and the Foundation for the Production and Translation of Dutch Literature jointly administer a modest scheme that provides residencies in Amsterdam for foreign writers whose work has been translated into Dutch.

The Prince Claus Fund is one of the main instruments used by the Foreign Ministry to support culture and development programmes in developing countries. It also collaborates with the Mondriaan Foundation and the Belgian Institute for Visual, Audiovisual & Media Art in organising cultural orientation visits for Dutch and Belgian creators to countries in the developing world.

³² Hoeckma, op.cit.

Portugal

Grants available in Portugal for international engagement and mobility are predominantly of three types: Scholarships and training (both long and short term), residencies, and travel to participate in events such as art fairs, book fairs and festivals. Government/governmental agencies and especially foundations are involved.

The Gulbenkian Foundation, in conjunction with the Luso-American Foundation, for example, offered some 50 scholarships of six to nine months in 2006 for the professional specialisation and development of Portuguese artists in European countries (especially the UK), Brazil and India. The same Foundations also co-operated in the awarding of “exemplary” scholarships and artistic residencies in Berlin, Madrid, etc for young artists. Another foundation, the Oriente Foundation, provides short scholarships in East and South East Asia for Portuguese cultural professionals to undertake training or field work there, and also a small number of grants for practitioners from the Far East to do the same in Portugal. The performers rights organisation Gestao dos Direitos dos Artistas Interpretes ou Executantes (GDA) provides funds for residencies, workshops and other programmes abroad for Portuguese performing artists.

The government’s Instituto Camoes offers a small number of travel grants for practitioners to take up artistic residencies in any country and a larger number of travel grants for cultural professionals to participate in international festivals and exhibitions. The General Direction of Books and Libraries in the Ministry of Culture provides travel and other modest financial assistance for participation in international book fairs. Through what is known as “Agreement Support”, another department of the Ministry – the General Direction of Arts – provides a limited number of larger awards to Portuguese galleries and artists to have a presence at international art fairs and major visual arts events.

As can be seen, there has been a particular emphasis on the visual arts and literature. It has been suggested that the relative neglect of the performing arts in international support is due in part to the fact that Portuguese language theatre does not travel well in Europe, where it is not widely spoken. Of itself this would not account for the apparent lack of support for international engagement of music, dance and physical theatre companies. There are other factors that have to be taken into consideration, such as the project based nature and financial insecurity of many smaller Portuguese companies. It is evident that financial support in Portugal for international performing arts work is more likely for an individual professional choreographer, theatre director, playwright or composer etc than for a company.

Another reality is the relatively small number of grants available in Portugal to support the mobility of cultural professionals elsewhere in the world to visit the country.

On a positive note, however, the introduction of the new *INOVart* programme referred to earlier, should enhance the mobility of Portuguese practitioners.

The UK

The UK has witnessed a rapid expansion of schemes and resources for international engagement in recent years from a relatively modest base at the start of the Millennium. The key players are the British Council, the UK Arts Councils (especially Arts Council England), Wales Arts International and Visiting Arts. Rather than attempting an audit of all schemes, we will focus briefly on their diversity. Before doing so it is worth drawing attention to the fact that:

- Arts Council England has relaxed the conditions of its grant-aid to enable supported arts organisations to apply a proportion of their funds to international work, whereas primarily it could only be allocated for domestic work.
- There are more collaborative schemes involving partners
- Several schemes have run for one or two years only.

The scope of Arts Council England's recent support schemes for individuals cover R&D, residencies, professional development, event participation, project co-operation and travel.

Through the Arts Council's *Grants for the arts* programme support can be given for research, training and continuing professional development, attending international training courses, networking or conferences, international exchanges, project development and touring work internationally. In its *International Fellowship Programme* from 2001-2008, artists (chosen through peer nomination) were offered awards for practice based research, experimentations and the development of new work. More than 250 artists received fellowships ranging from months to one year for use on some 35 countries around the world as well as the Arctic and Antarctic. The programme has been revised for the period to 2011. *Necessary Journeys* was a travel bursaries scheme with a global spread. It was operated in conjunction with the British Film Institute for artists working in digital media and benefited seven individuals in 2006-07. The *INTERACT Initiative (Diffraction Project)* was a placement scheme in research and industry contexts in the UK and internationally to demonstrate artists' contribution to the social, cultural and economic landscape. *International Curators Forum* was a scheme launched in 2007 that enabled 23 UK based African, Caribbean and Asian curators to attend and network at major visual arts events including the Venice Biennale and Documenta Kassel³³. *Artist Links* was an exchange programme operating from 2002-2006 in conjunction with the British Council. The focus was on English and Chinese artists and some 60 project awards were made, equally divided between practitioners from both countries. The geographical focus of the programme has now switched to English and Brazilian artists.

The Scottish Arts Council supports the mobility and professional development of practitioners through their participation in international training courses, workshops, conferences, master classes, mentoring schemes, research and travel to see work in situ and to make contacts. It runs a separate international scheme specifically for visual artists and curators, which includes residencies in Amsterdam, New York, etc. The Council also supports cultural exchange initiatives in theatre with the Netherlands and jazz with Sweden.

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland's *Support for the Individual Artist Programme* has three international strands for travel to go and see work in situ, for R&D and self-arranged residencies abroad, and for touring or exhibiting overseas. It also has residencies in various art forms in Canada, the USA, Malta and Italy.

Wales Arts International, funded by Arts Council of Wales and the British Council, operates an *International Opportunities Fund* for projects and travel, and the Arts Council itself supports training for practitioners, including opportunities overseas³⁴.

British Council interest in China is being extended through its new *China-UK Connections through Culture* initiative in partnership with the Department of Culture, Media & Sport, Foreign & Commonwealth Office and Scottish Parliament. It is designed for face-to-face cultural project development including job shadowing, and is driven by a wish to enhance diplomatic and trade ties. For many years the Council has provided grants to artists, with the

³³ This scheme is one of the case studies in this project.

³⁴ Wales Arts International is one of the case studies in this project.

intention of assisting with the costs of transporting artwork for exhibitions abroad. It supports visits by performers and companies and has given some prominence in recent years to British practitioners of African, Caribbean and Asian origins. However, the Council is far less involved now in the direct management of tours. *Creative Collaboration* is a new Council initiative, launched in November 2007 to build partnerships and networks for dialogue with artists, cultural professionals and academics across the South East Europe region. Eighteen countries are involved, including Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece and Romania, EU neighbourhood countries, Israel and, of course, the UK. One of its most innovative schemes is the *Young Creative Entrepreneurs Awards*, which identifies talented creative industry figures from emerging economies to make tailored visits to meet key players in their sector in the UK. Every year eight to ten young individuals from around the world are selected for these visits in each of the following disciplines: publishing, music, design, fashion, film, performing arts and, shortly, in this expanding scheme, the visual arts. During the UK visits one of the cultural entrepreneurs in each discipline also receives a financial prize to develop their work³⁵.

A parallel programme has also been introduced for *Young Creative Entrepreneurs* from the UK to make visits to leading figures in their sector in other countries. Most recently, the Council has indicated its intention to launch a seven year *International Cultural Leadership Project* with partners in Europe, North America and the Middle East. Presumably, this will complement existing initiatives such as the Council's Young Entrepreneurs Awards and Arts Council England's Cultural Leadership scheme.

Visiting Arts has several measures that promote mobility directly and indirectly. These include an *Artist-to-Artist International Scheme* for artists from other countries to spend a week in the UK working with a UK based artist. It's *Creative Collaborations* scheme (not to be confused with the British Council's *Creative Collaboration* scheme) supports projects that nurture creativity and enable international artists, young people and local communities to participate in intercultural activity. Artists from Europe and beyond have been involved. Visiting Arts funds organised visits of UK promoters, presenters and curators to go to see foreign arts work in situ (eg to Moscow to see a major showcase of Russian theatre and dance, or a curators visit to Romania). Other schemes include an *Arts Manager's Placement programme* and a *Critics programme* for young writers to view arts work. In common with the British Council and Arts Councils many of Visiting Arts' schemes involve countries outside Europe³⁶.

8. Conclusions

1. Few support measures cite mobility as an explicit objective in itself, though in many cases it might be an implicit outcome.
2. The UK has experienced the most striking developments with considerable policy change and a rapid expansion of schemes to promote international engagement (and mobility). This has been driven by several factors, in particular:
 - the UK Government's desire to promote and export the creative industries and the need to develop capacity and skills in practitioners to achieve this;
 - the promotion of the UK's cultural diversity internationally and the desirability for the professional development of UK practitioners of African, Caribbean and Asian descent;
 - the pursuit of cultural relations to redress damage to the UK's reputation caused by the Iraq war.

³⁵ This scheme is one of the case studies in this project.

³⁶ Visiting Arts is one of the case studies in this project.

3. The creation of Culture Ireland appears to have made a significant difference because of the injection of more money for international engagement and a more straightforward application process.
4. Although the Netherlands has a diverse range of schemes for international engagement and mobility with foundations playing an important role, Government resources to underpin mobility suggest a decline in real terms in budgetary plans.
5. Greater interest on the part of the Portuguese Government to support international engagement in recent years has not been matched by a corresponding increase in resources.
6. There is evidence in all four countries examined of attempts to achieve better co-ordination between government departments and/or quasi-public agencies to deliver policies and funding for international engagement.
7. The introduction of a new international training and work experience scheme (INOVart), in conjunction with the Ministry of Economy and Innovation could enhance the mobility of young Portuguese artists and creative industry professionals.
8. There is an imbalance between the amount of schemes and resources provided for nationals to engage internationally and those available for foreign cultural professionals and organisations to visit the four countries examined (though the British Council has introduced an innovative and expanding programme for young overseas cultural entrepreneurs).
9. There has been a growth in resources for international mobility that are designed for capacity building, and this is most evident in the UK.
10. A significant number of schemes have the destination open to the applicant, though the resources available may limit the choice of country. However, an increasing number of support schemes are focused on countries outside Europe. Concern has been expressed in the UK that this should not be to the disadvantage of those arts/artists more engaged with Europe.
11. Concerns were registered in Portugal and Ireland about a lack of visibility of their professionals in international networks and programmes such as Culture 2000. In Portugal this is blamed on a lack of information, while in Ireland the prime concern of small organisations is financial risk. There was also a perceived decline in the Dutch presence at international art fairs and biennales.
12. Breaking into international markets was a particular concern in Portugal and this led to artists gravitating to major cities in other countries.
13. The number of residencies and studios in the Netherlands for visiting artists has grown, whether independent artist-led initiatives or institution led. In academia they are increasingly referred to as research-in-residence. On the other hand, residencies are perceived as under-developed in countries such as Ireland and Portugal.
14. Visa proposals in the UK and domestic licensing and tax regulations in the Netherlands are seen as potential or real threats to mobility.(in relation to non EU/EEA nationals in the UK case).

15. The advantages of an international cultural institute as compared with cultural attachés in national embassies abroad remains a matter of debate, but the importance for artists mobility of directors or locally recruited arts officers in some cultural institutes needs to be underlined.
16. It is questionable whether support for international work and mobility has been integrated with domestic work in any of the countries studied, though recent developments in the UK have begun to address this.

9. *Additional Sources*

- Telephone conversation with Catherine Boothman, Head of Cultural Contact Point, Ireland
- Telephone conversations with Teresa Duarte Martinho, Observatorio das Actividades Culturais, Portugal
- Telephone and email correspondence with Ineke van Hamevsveld, Boekmanstichting, Netherlands
- Council of Europe/ERICarts, *Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe*, 2007