european cultural foundation newsletter

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European Cultural Foundation, April 2007

Content

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5 'Securing, as far as possible, equal opportunities for creative individuals to work and collaborate transnationally is not a pipedream. It can be done, and the demands of European integration require that it should be done.' **ECF statement on campaigning for improved provision for cultural mobility and exchange.**

6 'I believe that educational cooperation is a powerful instrument. I would like to engage the educational and cultural sectors as part of the challenge of building the bottom-up approach to making European integration work for the benefit of citizens.' **Hywel Ceri Jones, retiring ECF board member, on the lasting legacy of the Erasmus student exchange programme (managed by the ECF from 1987 to 1995).**

8 'A good collaboration project is based on knowledge and trust. Partners need to know each other well, to have a good appreciation of each other's working conditions and audiences.' **Mary Ann DeVlieg on what mobility means for artists and their work.**

9 'Those in the cultural sector need to join forces and achieve recognition for the sector's actual and potential contribution to society.' **Xavier Troussard on the importance of mobility to the EU's goal of promoting diversity and intercultural dialogue.**

10 'I propose changing fear-driven, control-oriented policies into more constructive ways of managing migration.' **Theo Veenkamp on how artists can help change attitudes to migration.**

11 'Mobility should be recognised as a lifelong learning experience and rewarded as career advancement.' **Joseph Jamar on bringing the benefits of mobility to citizens generally.**

12 'South-north exchanges cannot be healthy if the south itself is not strongly connected. It is essential to keep on supporting multi-directional connections with the rest of the world.' **Khadija El Bennaoui on Africa's experience of cultural mobility.**

13 'This return issue is important to tackle when one considers the effects of 'brain-drain'. If you look at Eastern Europe, movement often means a one-way ticket.' **Ritva Mitchell on what the research réveals about mobility patterns.**

14 Funds and tools for mobility support. **Cristina Farinha details the main forms of support available for travelling artists and culture professionals.**

Our thanks go to Cristina Farinha who conducted the interviews and compiled the mobility guide, and to all those who agreed to share their views and experiences with us.

ECF Statement

It is 13 years since we at the ECF launched our first mobility scheme for artists and cultural operators - APEXchanges (the ECF had already gathered plenty of educational experience through managing Erasmus). Support for cultural mobility has become a vital aspect of our work for the arts and for intercultural dialogue and exchange. Statistically, we could point to such facts as that, between 1994 and 2002, 1200 artists and cultural operators from Central and Eastern Europe have been able to travel within Europe to engage in collaborative projects; or that, since 2003, over 400 individuals have been able to work with partners in other countries thanks to ECF mobility funding; or that, in 2005 and 2006, our mobility scheme STEP beyond supported more than 450,000 km of travel within and beyond Europe for the sake of making creative connections. Welcome though these figures are, we realise that the needs of the cultural sector far outstrip the current capacity of mobility funders. We ask our partners to join with us in campaigning for improved provision for cultural mobility and exchange.

Certainly in recent years there have been encouraging developments, with new analytical tools (notably EricArts), information and/or training providers (On-The-Move, IETM, LabforCulture.org), as well as greater attention from policymakers at national and European levels (think of the inclusion of mobility in the EU's Culture 2007 programme and in the programme of the Nordic Council).

Yet, despite all progress, barriers to the free movement of artists, culture professionals and artworks remain. These must be removed if true cultural cooperation in the broader Europe is ever to take place.

This won't be easy. Visa rules, employment and copyright laws, migration and integration policies.... The issues involved are numerous and complex. But securing, as far as possible, equal opportunities for creative individuals to work and collaborate transnationally is not a pipedream. It can be done, and the demands of European integration require that it should be done. Intercultural competence comes from people from different backgrounds getting together in a spirit of sharing and joint work. In the cultural sphere, this means experiencing different artistic approaches, professional contexts and working methods, with a view to establishing creative cross-cultural relations.

We believe that Europe needs a substantial, comprehensive and flexible mobility programme that builds on and supports good practice. And that all concerned should push hard for this now.

Hywel Ceri Jones

I did my Degree in Classics and Modern Languages in Wales and I spent one year teaching in France. So I experienced at first hand the idea of the year abroad as an integral part of my degree programme. I felt it should be an important enrichment for students of every discipline. This has always coloured my experience and it was the beginning of my wider European interest.

In 1973 I came to the European Commission as its first head of Department for Education and Youth. By then there was some nervousness concerning the involvement of the European Community in these areas. The first set of proposals got through in 1976: including the launch of a project of joint study programmes in higher education.

I had a clear policy vision for Erasmus that was not simply about mobility. I conceived of Erasmus as embedding a European teaching and learning perspective in the curricula of universities for which mobility and exchange were instruments.

In those times exchange in Europe was very limited, involving mostly France, the UK and Germany through bilateral schemes. So for the other countries it was truly new territory. And it took ten years of running experimentally to gain the confidence of universities and governments before the first full Erasmus scheme was launched. The European Cultural Foundation (ECF) was chosen to support the Commission in the detailed animation, management and networking that would make Erasmus come alive.

The ECF used the Institute of Education in Paris, one of its satellite centres, to carry out the work.

My idea was that this experience would give an added dimension to the student's curriculum vitae, also increasing his or her employability. But I had another dream: if these programmes could go on generation after generation, we would develop, in all corners of society, future leaders who had a European experience and commitment.

I wanted Europe to be made by grassroots-level involvement and commitment – the bottom-up approach. What was clever about Erasmus was that the engagement was decentralised: it was up to the individual university to decide whether or not to participate.

One of the difficulties of the Erasmus programme is that the amount of money for the individual student has not necessarily been enough. It was designed to act as a catalyst for national and local authorities to add complementary financial resources. The overall budget has been gradually increasing through the years and that has allowed more students to be involved. The fact that over a million students have participated in the Erasmus student mobility programme and that we now have Erasmus offices in almost every university in Europe is a fantastic accomplishment.

The successful experimentation with the credit transfer scheme (ECTS) and the credibility brought by Erasmus were the foundation stones for the Bologna process. I am very excited by the prospect of this European process going from strength to strength, but I am also keen to see more investment in the real platform for lifelong learning, which is early childhood. So I would like to see more leverage on European funding in this sector. And I would like to provide more opportunities of a European experience for young people who are going through vocational education, many of whom are the ones who have difficulty in their careers.

I would also like to see structured cooperation at pre-university level, so that we create a sense of shared learning opportunities and stimulate young people to have a European perspective to the issues they are addressing.

There are still fears of standardisation though. I am not essentially worried, since there is no danger of the EU institutions seeking to standardise or harmonise in this field. The design of European cooperation should be very transparent and connected to the educational systems, so that they are themselves actively involved in the European decision-making.
I believe that educational cooperation is a powerful instrument. I would like to engage the educational and cultural sectors as part of the challenge of building the bottom-up approach to making European integration work for the benefit of citizens.

Culture needs to be given a higher profile by creating a favourable environment, which involves engaging this dimension within countries as well as focusing on the European level.

The challenge for the next decade is to have the determination to push for the full implementation of what is already in the Treaty both for education and culture. If we look into the cultural article of the Treaty, there is still a lot of potential for action, but too little has been accomplished so far.

And we should not forget the regions of Europe. That would be my dream too: regions becoming real actors, because that engages the grassroots again in the integration process, especially as many regions are directly responsible for their cultural policy.

Hywel Ceri Jones: ECF Board Member 1999 to 2006; former Chairman of the European Policy Centre's Governing Board; Director of the Network of European Foundations (NEF); former director of the Commission's Task Force for Education, Youth and Human Resources; acting Director-General for Education and Youth and Director-General for Employment and Social Affairs, the European Commission.

Erratum

p.7 bibliography of Hywel Ceri Jones

should read

Hywel Ceri Jones: ECF Board Member 1999 to 2006; former Chairman of the European Policy Centre's Governing Board; Director of the Network of European Foundations (NEF); former director of the Commission's Task Force for Education, Youth and Human Resources, **former** acting Director-General for Education and Youth and Director-General for Employment and Social Affairs, the European Commission.

Mary Ann DeVlieg

Although mobility should not be seen as an essential component of artistic creation (many artists have an extremely good relationship with a local public), it offers a view into other realities. If art is essentially the production of meaning using symbols, and if movement changes one's perception, then movement is very interesting for artists because it deepens their understanding of reality by giving them different viewpoints, fresh inspiration, as well as new artistic languages. This helps them to operate as 'sensors', capable of showing audiences other worlds through their work.

A good collaboration project is based on knowledge and trust. Partners need to know each other well, to have a good appreciation of each other's working conditions and audiences. As an international network for the contemporary performing arts, IETM has always been about encouraging performing arts professionals to collaborate with each other across national borders. We support people so that they can have equal access to all the tools of mobility - the knowledge, information, skills and experiences.

New technologies offer new types of virtual mobility and communication, which can save time and resources. We must work on improving general access to high-speed internet as a counterpart of physical mobility, even though human face-to-face encounter can never be wholly replaced.

Until every artistic operator can apply to a mobility fund and every structure has a budget for mobility costs, IETM will continue to advocate a diversity of mobility funds covering different art forms, age groups and regions.

Mary Ann DeVlieg, General of the International Network for the Contemporary Performing Arts (IETM); founder and overall direction of On-The-Move; founder of the Roberto Cimetta Fund; winner of the European Workers' Mobility Award in 2006.

Xavier Troussard

Mobility is becoming a priority issue in cultural-political terms. On the one hand it opens a door onto encounter with other cultures. And on the other hand it allows artists to experience a wider European dimension which they can incorporate into their work.

Yet artists face several difficulties when travelling. The EU must work alongside Member States to simplify legal frameworks, as is the case with taxation and social security systems. We are currently drafting a common agenda for Europe which aims to gather and entrust all the different stakeholders as players in the political arena. Within this broad cluster we should be able to identify and assemble resources and synergies.

Mobility is a key tool in pursuing our broader objectives of promoting diversity and intercultural dialogue. I am looking forward to developing relations between the EU and third countries under the axes of the UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity. For the EU neighbourhood, we should consider how to facilitate the issuing of visas for artists travelling to festivals, for example, and also support schemes that encourage mobility.

There are many opportunities to bring the cultural industries into this diversity agenda. At the grassroots level they need creative people, so they are also interested in investing in this experimental dimension. And mobility schemes within artists' residencies provide an opportunity for artists to come together and develop work that portrays diversity in a new way.

Those in the cultural sector need to join forces and achieve recognition for the sector's actual and potential contribution to society. The 2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue could be the time to do just this.

Xavier Troussard, Head of Unit – Culture at Directorate-General for Education and Culture, the European Commission.

Theo Veenkamp

Migration is basically a sign of human vitality. Nevertheless it is very controversial. Not everybody agrees that we need migration in the same way and to the same extent.

I propose changing fear-driven, control-oriented policies into more constructive ways of managing migration.

In the People Flow report I suggest approaching migrants in terms of their motivations and channelling them accordingly. For those that have a counterpart organisation in the receiving countries, the official gatekeepers' function might well be delegated to these organisations. Artists touring, for instance, would easily be granted a visa in this manner. A new type of very basic residential status should be created for such pioneering migrants as artists who are trying to improve their prospects.

I am worried about the influence that the prevailing approach to migration has on the overall climate for integration. The resulting signals make it difficult for newcomers to be accepted and to embark on a positive integration process.

Artists could be a big help in triggering a shift in attitude through the power of narratives and images. We need just as much effort put into designing innovative alternatives to existing migration policies as is put into all sorts of technological innovations. Artists could play a vital role in bringing the meaning of such alternatives to life, both for decision-makers and the public at large.

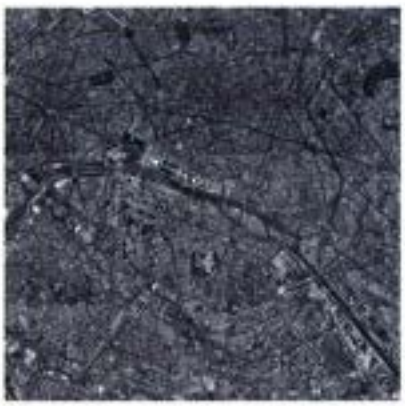
Our contemporary societies depend on the fact that we can participate in many communities at the same time, physically but also virtually. For this reason we need to conceive of new, complementary sorts of citizenship also.

Theo Veenkamp: co-author of the 'People Flow' report, Demos/Open Democracy; Senior Adviser for Van Vollenhoven Institute for Law, Governance and Development, University of Leiden; former Director of the Netherlands Organisation for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC) and of the Dutch Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers.

Joseph Jamar

There is a gap between the relevance of mobility to the EU and the limited extent of current geographical and job-to-job mobility. This divergence raises questions regarding the adaptability of the workforce but also social security systems.

Paradoxically, in the European labour market there is unemployment in some regions while in others there are jobs unfilled. This is due to the absence of a mobility culture and to the impact of existing obstacles.



Mobility should be recognised as a lifelong learning experience and rewarded as career advancement. It can help increase employability and also improve professional and informal skills through contact with other working environments, customs and languages.

It is essential to foster (alongside employers) the notion of fair mobility by ensuring respect for labour conditions and equal standards of treatment. Mobility ought to be prepared and accompanied at all stages: from making available comprehensive and up-to-date information at the time of departure to providing mechanisms for reintegrating people into the job market on their return.

We are about to celebrate 50 years of the Treaty of Rome and the Free Movement of Workers, but we are living at a critical moment in the relationship between the EU and its citizens. In this respect, mobility can acquire a new cultural dimension in determining and transmitting what Europe is about.

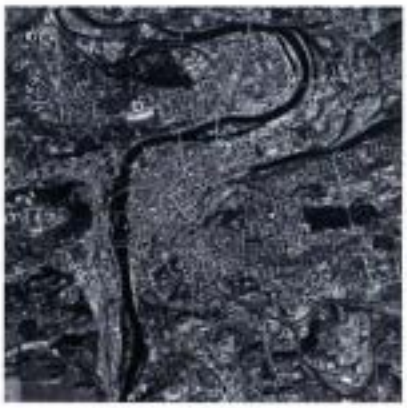
We should create the means to provide mobility experiences to citizens more generally. Such European experiences might also be very important in counteracting prejudiced attitudes towards migration from third countries.

Joseph Jamar: Coordinator of the 2006 European Year of Workers Mobility; Deputy Head of Unit of Employment Services; Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, the European Commission.

Khadija El Bennaoui

Travels within the African continent are expensive and are hindered by a lack of good connections. That's why encounters often have to take place in Europe. Yet African artists are eager to discover each other, to build partnerships and reintroduce a dynamic to their countries.

Even though there are now qualified professionals in Africa, independent artistic initiatives must endure precarious conditions, sustained only by the support of international organisations.



The Young Arab Theatre Fund aims to develop a circuit for the mobility of artists and art works within a geographical area that shares a strong common historical and linguistic background: the Arab-speaking world and Sub-Saharan Africa.

We believe that south-north exchanges cannot be healthy if the south itself is not strongly connected. It is essential to keep on supporting multi-directional connections with the rest of the world.

Sub-Saharan Africa already has some active channels for circulating information, as opposed to North Africa and the Middle East, where networking is less developed. And traditionally, in West Africa, travel was seen as a means of educating the individual at the onset of adulthood.

The challenge is to strengthen cultural organisations that might form the basis of an internal market that could generate resources in the continent. This requires the involvement of governments, especially those which have a pan-African vision and are already involved in economic exchanges and cultural cooperation.

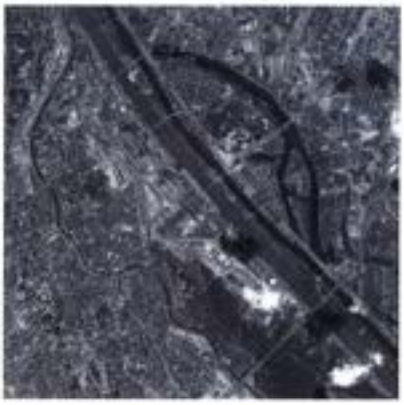
Culture would have a better chance of being financially sustainable if its economic potential and capacity to engender new kinds of development were perceived more clearly. And mobility can play an important role in this respect, since good examples breed other good examples.

Khadija El Bennaoui: Programme Coordinator of the Young Arab Theatre Fund (YATF); Coordinator of Arts Moves Africa (AMA).

Ritva Mitchell

If we want to get an overall picture of mobility trends in Europe, we need to develop a structural way of gathering collective data.

Mobility patterns differ according to art forms. The film industry is incredibly mobile, due in part to international funding. The experimental performing arts need to develop their work by touring and widening their audiences.



We find some artistic hot spots in Europe. There is a vibrant community of media artists in Barcelona, while Berlin attracts visual artists. Many classical musicians are also drawn to Germany for its network of orchestras and operas.

Most movements are from east to west, from the south to the centre, and from the poles to the centre. The causes are mostly economic, but some are political or purely artistic. There are movements in the opposite directions, too, as a result of a search for new inputs or for cheaper locations (e.g. cinema productions).

There are many obstacles. The recognition (or non-recognition) of qualifications might not affect painters, but could hamper music teachers. And if you stay abroad for quite some time you might lose track of social networks and come back as an outsider.

This return issue is important to tackle when one considers the effects of 'brain-drain'. If you look at Eastern Europe, movement often means a one-way ticket. There should be investment in the cultural life of these countries so that cultural professionals have opportunities to work there. And then mobility would be a clear choice.

Ritva Mitchell: Research Director of Cupore - Finish Foundation for Cultural Policy Research; President of the Board of ERICarts - European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research.

Funds and tools for mobility support

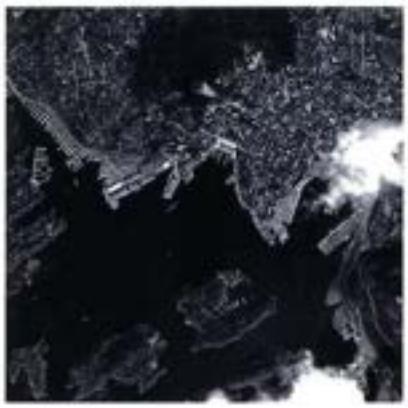
Compiled by Cristina Farinha

1. FUNDS

1.1 STEP beyond / European Cultural Foundation

The STEP beyond mobility fund was launched by the ECF in 2003 as the follow-up to its earlier APEXchanges programme (1994-2001), which initially provided support for individual art and cultural professionals from Central Eastern Europe to travel and participate in pan-European cooperation.

STEP beyond supports cross-border movement by individual artists and other cultural workers (operators, translators, researchers and journalists) between all European countries, including the South Caucasus states of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia (in collaboration with the Open Society Institute Budapest).



Trips undertaken for exploration, inspiration and networking as well as for the actual development of collaboration and partnership projects are eligible for support. The Fund contributes to the payment of travel and visa costs and, in some cases, accommodation expenses.

At present, priority is given to travel that enhances and illustrates experiences of diversity and intercultural creative cooperation, and also to eastward travel that emphasises the broader European territory.

1.2. Arts and Culture Network Programme / Open Society Institute Budapest

The **Open Society Institute Budapest**, part of the **Soros Foundation** network, has been devoted to the promotion of collaborative cross-border artistic and cultural initiatives through its **Arts and Culture Network Programme**.

Prior to 2004, schemes such as Looking Inside and the Mobility Fund directly promoted mobility and east-east placements for individual cultural managers and art professionals within Central and Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and Mongolia.

Currently, the **Partnership for Development** programme focuses geographically on the Caucasus and Central Asia plus Afghanistan, Iran, Mongolia and Turkey. It welcomes proposals, from individuals as well as grassroots and public organisations, of artistic or culturally oriented initiatives that involve collaboration between artists or operators in at least three of the target countries.

The programme includes a mobility scheme that covers the travel and accommodation expenses and per diems of the initiatives supported.

1.3. Roberto Cimetta Fund (RCF)

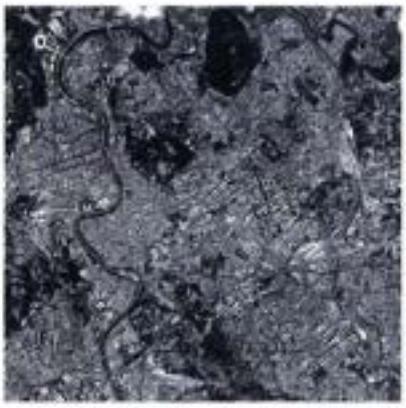
The **Roberto Cimetta Fund** promotes the mobility of contemporary visual and performing artists as well as cinema professionals within the Mediterranean area. Interestingly, it was originally set up (in 1989) to support the travel of people coming from Central Eastern Europe to IETM meetings (International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts, previously known as Informal European Theatre Meeting).

The Fund is named after the respected theatre and festival director (and one of IETM's founders), Roberto Cimetta. In 1996, the Fund changed its focus to the Mediterranean, a region

where artists are frequently confronted with a scarcity of infrastructure as well as resources for working and travelling.

Individual grants (awarded in collaboration with the ECF) cover travel and visa costs for trips linked to exchange, networking and cooperation. The Fund gives special attention to projects and experiences that demonstrate a sense of further continuity and that involve the transfer of knowledge and skills, whether locally or in a wider circle of professionals.

All professional artists, cultural operators and technicians working in the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean Sea are eligible for support. Other European professionals whose proposals have a strong Mediterranean connection can also apply.



The Roberto Cimetta Fund also organises platforms on regional artistic issues, comparing experiences and know-how. Recently, the Fund and the Anna Lindh Foundation concluded a cooperation agreement on supporting mobility and exchange in arts and culture throughout the Euro-Med region.

1.4. Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures (ALF) / Grants Programme

The **Anna Lindh Foundation**'s grants programme promotes a dynamic concept of dialogue between cultures and people and contributes to the visibility of the Barcelona Process through intellectual, cultural and civil society exchanges. The mobility of artists is considered one of the thematic priorities within their call for proposals.

The members of the ALF National Networks are eligible to apply to its Mobility of Artists funding line, with proposals for summer schools, artists-in-residence schemes and exchange programmes.

1.5. Art Moves Africa (AMA): mobility fund of artists and cultural operators within the African continent

Initiated in 2005 by the **Young Arab Theatre Fund** (YATF) and other Arab and African organisations, **Art Moves Africa** facilitates cultural and artistic exchanges within the African continent. **AMA** functions as a YATF programme, but will soon be registered as an independent international association.

AMA supports the costs of travel, visa and travel insurance incurred by arts professionals and cultural operators living in Africa and working in the performing and visual arts as well as music and cinema. It gives preference to cross-regional travel, while allocating 40% of its budget to travel within one of the five African regions (North, West Central, East and Southern Africa).

AMA encourages and supports initiatives that contribute to: collaboration with other professionals; the exchange of information and development of informal networks; the expansion of projects, practices and ideas; the enhancement of artistic and technical skills; and the discovery of different artistic fields.

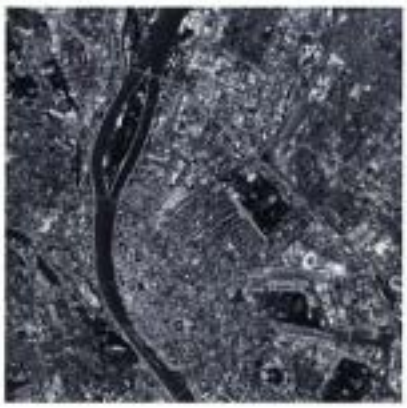
Grantees are expected to be able to demonstrate their project's long-term impact and to share their experience by encouraging networking in

their own countries.

1. 6. Young Arab Theatre Fund (YATF)

The **Young Arab Theatre Fund** was founded in 1999 to encourage freedom of artistic expression through creative cooperation and partnership between young artists in the Arab world. Its long-term goal is to support the sustainability of independent theatre and the performing arts and to foster their development.

The YATF provides different linked schemes that cover the whole artistic process. Firstly, it offers financial and technical support to enable the realisation and production of theatrical and other performing arts projects. Then it helps productions to tour within the region and internationally, to explore new partnerships in different cities and to expand their touring possibilities. It also enables individual artists to travel to attend festivals and other events where they can meet colleagues, see other productions and make new contacts. And, finally, it is developing a programme that aims to create new cultural venues by building partnerships with local partners and independent organisations in various Arab cities.



Since 2000, the YATF has been organising thematic events, such as Meeting Points, which stimulate artistic ideas and encourage dialogue between artists from different geographical backgrounds and disciplines.

1.7. Nordic Council of Ministers / Mobility and Residence Programme

The **Nordic Council of Ministers** recently introduced a structural reform in its cultural funding system in order to give cultural cooperation a fresh impulse. The significant difference is a change from institution-based and sector-thinking towards thematic ventures and programmes with a limited time frame.

Included in this first outline, the **Mobility and Residence Programme** is a cross-sector framework programme which provides funding for network-building among cultural players, residency and guest-studio activities as well as individual mobility. The programme is open to professional artists, operators, teachers, producers and cultural players within arts and culture and cultural heritage.

The Council's **Model for Network Funding** supports network-building within the Nordic art world. It does not fund the creation of new permanent structures, but promotes the necessary conditions for existing players to be able to work together, develop partnerships and learn from each other.

The **Model for Cooperation Circle for Residencies** helps residencies to develop and to receive artists from the Nordic countries, and also helps such artists to secure residencies.

The **Mobility Funding Module** financially supports individual Nordic art and culture professionals from all fields, paying their accommodation costs for visits to another Nordic country. It also funds travels from the West Nordic region (the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Iceland) to other Nordic countries and vice versa.

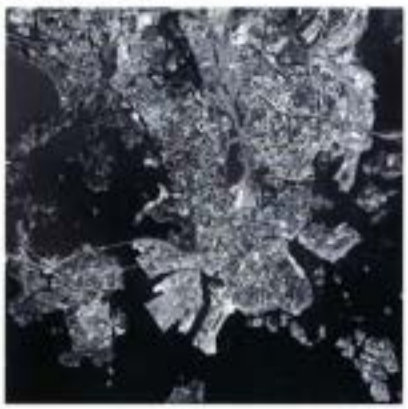
2. TOOLS

2.1. On-The-Move (OTM) - The performing Arts Traveller's Toolkit

http://www.on-the-move.org

The creation of the web portal **On-The-Move**, freely accessible to the general public since 2003, is IETM's answer to the myriad of questions concerning international issues posed to them by its members and many other artistic and cultural operators.

In 2000, a feasibility study funded by the ECF and undertaken by IETM, Relais Culture Europe and Lasipalatsi identified specific types of needs and paved the way for the construction of a pilot portal involving partners in Belgium, The Netherlands and Portugal (supported by the ECF, the Dutch Fund for Amateur Art and Performing Arts and the European Commission). Initiated as an IETM project, On-The-Move became an independent international non-profit organisation in 2004.



On-The-Move is a practical tool that gathers together international mobility information, resources and opportunities in the contemporary performing arts disciplines, including music. Currently, texts on the site are presented in two languages, English and German. The idea behind the site is to direct people on their way to finding a solution, since it features, alongside general information, links to specific sites with relevant data on activities, funding, partners search, job vacancies and legal and other practical subjects for arts professionals who are 'on the move'.

Geographically, it focuses on Europe but intends to promote its connections with the rest of the world. Most of the visitors are actually from Europe but it does attract users from many other countries worldwide – mainly performing arts professionals who wish to realise an international activity.

2.2. LabforCulture - Sharing culture across Europe

http://www.labforculture.org

LabforCulture has been developed as an online tool for cultural practitioners, operators and managers, as well as artists and arts organisations, cultural researchers, research bodies, policy makers and funders in arts and culture. It is a partnership project initiated by the ECF and is jointly developed, funded and supported by many of Europe's leading cultural organisations.

LabforCulture is the most comprehensive online information and knowledge platform dedicated to European cultural cooperation, complemented by offline services and programmed activities. The website provides an unprecedented range of information on cultural cooperation across the broader Europe, as well as offering a platform for transnational cultural exchange, cultural debate, news and research. Visitors to the website can find out about funding opportunities, get cultural news from across Europe, search a vast directory of organisations involved in cultural cooperation, access resources for cultural research, and be introduced to cultural activities in under-exposed and lesser known regions across Europe.

Launched in June 2006, LabforCulture is available in five languages: English, French, German, Polish and Spanish. Content for the website is gathered through a diverse network of editors, partners and from online users themselves. In addition to uploading content to the site, LabforCulture users can create their own profile and network with their peers online through interactive features such as blogs, forums and online working groups.

The LabforCulture offline activities include initiating trans-disciplinary research and development projects in new areas of cultural cooperation. Recently commissioned research projects include: 'Dynamics, Causes and Consequences of Mobility in European Arts and Culture' and 'Cultural Components of EU Foreign Policy'. LabforCulture is also working on the ground with local and regional cultural communities to develop and provide access to innovative online tools that will support increased cultural cooperation and mobility across Europe.

2.3. EURES: 'The European job mobility portal' / European Commission
http://eures. europa.eu

EURES, the **European Employment Service**, was set up in 1993 through cooperation between the European Commission and the national public employment services of the EU and the Member States of the European Economic Area, along with Switzerland and other partners such as trade unions and employers' organisations. It is the largest EU network, with 700 mobility advisers and an online portal in 25 languages. These features make it a unique tool.

EURES provides information, advice and recruitment/ placement (job-matching) services for workers, employers and citizens wishing to benefit from the principle of the free movement of persons. It has developed expertise in practical, legal and administrative matters relating to mobility at national and cross-border levels.

As well as posting job vacancies and CVs, the portal contains a database on issues of living and working as well as announcements of learning opportunities in the different countries of the network.

EURES plays a special role in border regions, where about twenty cross-border partnerships Europe-wide locally assist more than 600,000 people living in one country and commuting to work in another.

The European Commission intends to involve EURES soon in monitoring labour markets and mobility trends, and gradually open the service to workers coming from other parts of the world.

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Citymaps

Page 3 : Berlin, Germany
Page 5 : Amsterdam, Netherlands
Page 6 : Brussels, Belgium
Page 7 : Copenhagen, Denmark
Page 8 : Madrid, Spain
Page 9 : Paris, France
Page 10: Prague, Czech Republic
Page 11: Vienna, Austria
Page 12: Oslo, Norway
Page 13: Rome, Italy
Page 14: Budapest, Hungary
Page 15: Helsinki, Finland
Page 16: Warsaw, Poland

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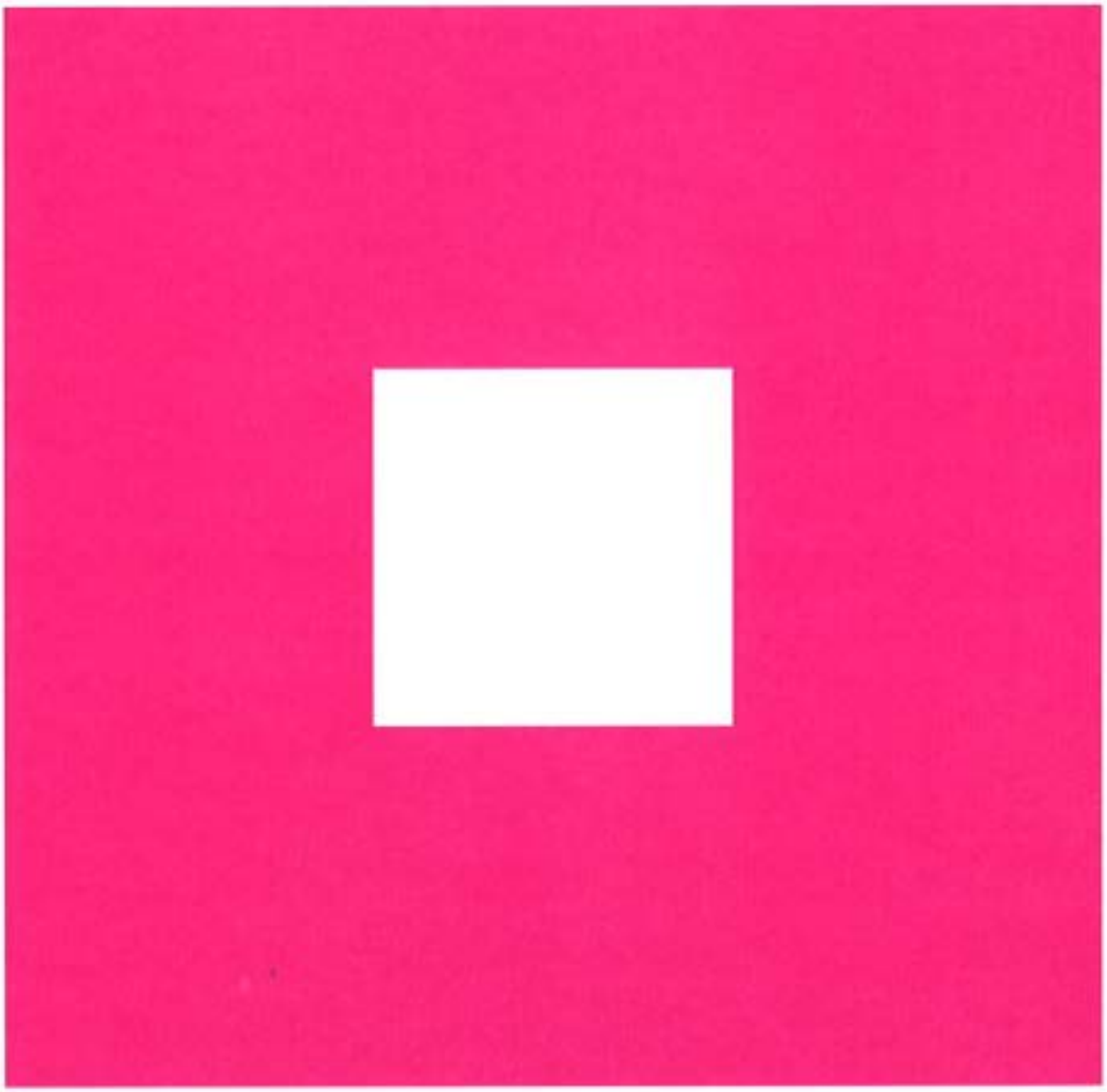

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