

Council conclusions on mobility information services for artists and for culture professionals

(2011/C 175/02)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

HAVING REGARD TO:

- the Culture Programme 2007-2013 ⁽¹⁾ and its specific objective on transnational mobility of artists and culture professionals;
- the Resolution of the Council of 16 November 2007 on a European Agenda for Culture ⁽²⁾, according to which mobility of artists and culture professionals makes a fundamental contribution to achieving its strategic objectives;
- the Council Conclusions of 21 May 2008 on the Work Plan for Culture 2008-2010 ⁽³⁾ and notably priority 1, 'Improving the conditions for the mobility of artists and other professionals in the cultural field';
- the Council Conclusions of 18 November 2010 on the Work Plan for Culture 2011-2014 ⁽⁴⁾ and notably priority area C, 'Skills and mobility';
- the Unesco Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions of 20 October 2005 ⁽⁵⁾ to which the EU and its many Member States are parties; they are hence committed to ensuring that artists, culture professionals and citizens worldwide can create, produce, disseminate and enjoy a broad range of cultural activities, goods and services, including their own;

REFERRING TO:

- the Commission Staff Working Document 'Analysis of the consultation launched by the Green Paper on "Unlocking the potential of cultural and creative industries"', and notably the chapter on mobility and circulation ⁽⁶⁾, stressing that many contributors commented on regulatory, legal and other issues impacting on mobility and called for the provision of information on those issues;

- the European Parliament pilot project for artist mobility dedicated to supporting the environment for the mobility of artists, including the study on information systems ⁽⁷⁾;

- the June 2010 report of the open method of coordination working group on the mobility of artists and culture professionals and notably its recommendations on mobility information provision for artists and culture professionals, including the guidelines for Mobility Information Services ⁽⁸⁾;

WHEREAS:

- the mobility of artists and culture professionals in Europe is crucial to enhance cultural and linguistic diversity and intercultural dialogue. This deserves to be actively promoted by the European Union and its Member States;

- the mobility of artists and culture professionals promotes creative encounters as well as production and exchange of cultural goods and services;

- mobility reinforces a sense of belonging to the European Union and deeper knowledge of our common cultures;

- mobility is important to the full functioning of the European labour market in accordance with the Treaties. More active and efficient use of the possibilities inherent to the single market can create new jobs and work opportunities for artists and culture professionals and thereby promote employment in the culture sector and the wider economy;

- cultural and artistic work is increasingly taking place in international contexts in which opportunities for work, touring, residencies, cooperation, co-production, career development, training and peer learning frequently arise beyond national borders;

- more and better mobility can contribute to achieving the objectives of the Europe 2020 strategy, namely smart, sustainable and inclusive growth ⁽⁹⁾;

⁽¹⁾ OJ L 372, 27.12.2006, p. 1.

⁽²⁾ OJ C 287, 29.11.2007, p. 1.

⁽³⁾ OJ C 143, 10.6.2008, p. 9.

⁽⁴⁾ OJ C 325, 2.12.2010, p. 1.

⁽⁵⁾ Council Decision 2006/515/EC of 18 May 2006 on the conclusion of the Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions (OJ L 201, 25.7.2006, p. 15). The Convention contains measures that are relevant to mobility and cultural exchange.

⁽⁶⁾ SEC(2011) 399 final.

⁽⁷⁾ 'Information systems to support the mobility of artists and other professionals in the culture field: a feasibility study', Ecotec, 2009 — http://ec.europa.eu/culture/key-documents/doc2039_en.htm

⁽⁸⁾ http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-policy-development/doc1569_en.htm

⁽⁹⁾ COM(2010) 2020 final.

- resolving administrative and regulatory issues that can create barriers to mobility of artists and culture professionals is usually beyond the remit of the culture authorities; therefore networking and cooperation between several services at European, national, regional and local level is important;
- one of the main obstacles cited by artists and culture professionals seeking to be mobile within the EU is the difficulty of obtaining accurate and comprehensive information and advice on mobility-related issues;

CALLS ON THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE SPHERES OF COMPETENCE AND WITH DUE REGARD TO THE PRINCIPLE OF SUBSIDIARITY, TO:

- facilitate the provision by mobility information services of comprehensive and accurate information to artists and culture professionals seeking to be mobile within the EU. To this end, make best use of expertise within public administration and cultural sector organisations. Where appropriate, build on existing services to disseminate the information, acknowledging that in some cases these are the primary source of accurate information.

For this purpose, mobility information services are understood to be services providing information to artists and culture professionals seeking to be mobile within the EU.

The target group of mobility information services is understood to be incoming, residing and outgoing artists and culture professionals. The community of 'artists and culture professionals' includes all artistic, managerial, logistic, communication and other professionals in the cultural sector and in artistic professions which are exercised in other sectors⁽¹⁾. In addition to individual artists and culture professionals, operators include in particular groups, ensembles and organisations. Since a number of the artists living and working in Europe are third-country nationals, special attention could be paid to their specific needs.

In this context, mobility information services are defined by common quality standards, agreed information topics and strategic partnerships.

The quality standards define a common voluntary commitment from all stakeholders involved in the (network of) mobility information service(s) in order to ensure high quality information to the users.

⁽¹⁾ The broader group of culture professionals includes, e.g. curators, directors and staff of cultural institutions, technicians, stage building workers, ICT experts, communication specialists, etc.

It is envisaged that the common minimum information content available would consist of topics covering regulatory, administrative and other issues concerning mobility such as social security, taxation, intellectual property rights, visas and work permits, insurance and customs, and recognition of professional qualifications. In addition, information on funding and training opportunities could also be provided.

Strategic partnerships are needed to guarantee the quality of information in the abovementioned areas. Bodies concerned may include inter alia EU, national and regional authorities, cultural institutions, employers' and employees' associations, and training establishments;

TO PROMOTE THE MOST EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONING OF INFORMATION SERVICES FOR ARTISTS AND CULTURE PROFESSIONALS, THE FOLLOWING SHOULD APPLY:

- peer learning and training opportunities for information providers should be fostered in order to develop a good understanding of the working and living conditions of artists and culture professionals and to build up knowledge of relevant national and EU regulations and procedures. This will help ensure that information providers can fully direct users toward information on national and EU rules and regulations, procedures, rights and obligations;
- networking between information providers is essential in order to ensure that providers in different Member States can enter into contact to help their 'home' artists and culture professionals obtain the information they are seeking on regulations and conditions in 'destination' Member States. Networking also provides opportunities for capacity building and peer learning. For the system to work well, it is essential that information providers in all Member States are involved;
- basic data on the use of mobility information services should be collected in order to improve the quality and accessibility of these services. Recurrent and structural issues relating to regulations and their applications should be reported to the competent national administrations and to the relevant European Commission services in order to improve mobility conditions in the longer term;

TO THIS END, THE COMMISSION IS INVITED TO:

- establish an expert working group, as set out in the Work Plan for Culture 2011-2014, to propose common content and quality standards for information and advice services to artists and culture professionals seeking to be mobile within the EU. The group will identify the detailed topics and content guidelines for mobility information services,

including information for third-country nationals. The June 2010 report of the open method of coordination working group on the mobility of artists and culture professionals, including the guidelines for Mobility Information Services, will form the basis of the consideration in the expert group's work;

- without prejudice to the discussions on the future multi-annual Financial Framework, explore financial support for information services aimed at artists and culture professionals seeking to be mobile when developing its proposals for future programmes;
- disseminate mobility information through EU platforms⁽¹⁾ and direct enquiries to specialised Member State or cultural sector services capable of providing comprehensive and accurate mobility information and assistance to artists and culture professionals;

MEMBER STATES ARE INVITED TO:

- adopt, on the basis of inter alia the proposal of the expert working group mentioned above, common minimum content and quality standards when establishing or further developing mobility information services for artists and culture professionals and to fill gaps in existing national information services where necessary;

- building on national structures and traditions ensure that mobility information services are neutral and as cost-effective, flexible and user focused as possible;
- identify tools for the public dissemination of mobility information to artists and culture professionals, making use where appropriate of existing services;
- provide their national information which is relevant to the mobility of artists and culture professionals on an internet multilingual website if possible. Translation, including automatic one, should be encouraged in order to promote multilingualism, make information easily accessible and facilitate mobility projects;

MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION ARE INVITED TO:

- work in close cooperation to encourage networking between mobility information services at European level, thus improving information provision to artists and culture professionals seeking to be mobile within the EU, building on existing information and advice partnerships, including those with the cultural sector, and further developing these where appropriate;
- monitor the provision of mobility information services in order to improve the quality and accessibility of these services.

⁽¹⁾ Your Europe (<http://ec.europa.eu/youreurope/>); Eures (European Job Mobility portal, <http://ec.europa.eu/eures>).