

Brexit, the arts sector, creative industries, heritage and the Welsh language

December 2018

Introduction

- 1.** The National Assembly's Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee has carried out a short inquiry into the impact of Brexit on creative industries, arts and heritage organisations in Wales and the Welsh language. The Committee conducted a written consultation between 11 September 2018 and 8 October 2018 and received 15 responses. On 18 October we invited representatives from a selection of organisations that responded in writing to attend our Committee meeting to discuss the topic in more detail.
- 2.** We also heard from Lord Dafydd Elis Thomas AM, the Welsh Government's Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport. This report summarises the main issues and makes recommendations for the Welsh Government.

Background

- 3.** Wales receives EU funding for our creative industries, arts, cultural and heritage organisations. It also benefits from cultural and academic work experience programmes and knowledge exchange networks. The creative industries benefit from the single market for goods and services and the free movement of people which allows visa-free work and travel in any of the Member States.
- 4.** Other EU support mechanisms, such as agricultural and rural support payments, may also play an important role in indirectly supporting the Welsh language, given its strength in many rural areas of Wales.



Direct and indirect funding supports for the arts and heritage sectors and creative industries

5. The Committee heard many examples of the boost to creative industries from EU funding. The most frequently cited funding sources are: Creative Europe, Horizon 2020, Erasmus+ and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The funding for rural areas from the Rural Development Fund (Wales' Common Agricultural Policy payments) was also cited as crucial to Welsh speaking areas.

6. It is impossible to say for certain how much EU funding the sectors within the Committee's remit currently receive. This is for a number of reasons. For example, many funding streams are not explicitly focussed on these sectors, but support them for as a means to a particular end. For example, the Welsh Government's Heritage Tourism Project has received funding through the ERDF, which is designed to support economic growth and jobs. However, some bodies have estimated the amount of EU funding going to particular sectors in Wales:

- The Arts Council for Wales has estimated that between 2006 and 2017 arts organisations in Wales received £18m from the European Structural & Investment Funds¹ and £6 million for rural art projects from the Rural Development Plan from 2007-16.
- The Historic Environment Group says that "the sector received a minimum of £74 million in EU funding" in 2007-16".
- The British Film Institute has calculated that between 2007 and 2017 Welsh screen industries projects received £24.9 million of EU funding: 10% of the UK total.

7. Further instances of EU funding of projects within the Committee's remit are explored below.

8. European Structural and Investment Funding is designed to create an environment which will support economic growth and jobs.² It consists of the European Social Fund (ESF) and the ERDF. The Committee heard examples of

¹ Arts Council for Wales, *Assessing the EU's contribution to the arts in Wales since 2007*, August 2017

² https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes/overview-funding-programmes/european-structural-and-investment-funds_en

projects supported by these funds, such as £1.7 million for the Galeri Arts Centre in Caernarfon and £15 million for Pontio, Bangor University's arts centre. The "Reach the Heights programme" was a recipient of ESF, through which the Arts Council of Wales distributed over £10 million to 73 projects involving over 9,000 young people.

9. The National Library for Wales also participated in an ESF funded network called the Network of Digital Methods in the Arts and Humanities.³

10. Creative Europe is the European Commission's framework programme for support to the culture and audio visual sectors.⁴ Both Literature in Wales and Wales Arts International called on the Welsh Government to remain part of Creative Europe in the event that the UK withdraws from it. Literature Wales wrote:

"Given the devolved nature of culture and education matters, WG should and could do this even if the UK Government does not wish to continue full participation in these programmes ... if the UK wishes to leave Creative Europe as an active participant, Wales could remain, but this might have costly financial implications. Such scenarios should be considered carefully by WG."⁵

11. The Creative Industries Federation report states: "The UK receives more funding than almost any other country through Creative Europe. The impact has been transformational in many parts of the UK's nations and regions".⁶

12. The Welsh Language Commissioner gave a number of examples of the benefits of EU funding to Wales. For instance, the post 16 education sector has received funding from Erasmus+ to:

"support the exchange of students and staff with educational institutions abroad. Since 2014, over £40 million has been awarded to institutions in Wales through Erasmus+ and over 7000 individuals have benefitted from this support. One specific example could be the success of CollegesWales to attract the Erasmus+ funds to support practitioners from the post-16 sector in Wales to travel to the Basque

³ National Library for Wales written evidence

⁴ https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/about_en

⁵ Literature Wales written evidence

⁶ Quoted in TAC written evidence

Country and Catalonia in order to develop a better understanding of bilingual education in these contexts.”⁷

13. The Welsh Books Council told the Committee that “Literature has been enriched in the past from cooperation through European funding schemes such as Literature across Frontiers, Creative Europe, Horizons 2020 and Erasmus”.⁸

14. The European Language Equality Network wrote:

“Several minority language speaking areas in the UK’s jurisdiction have received significant investment of European Union structural funds which has been partly directed to develop the economy of such areas... European Union funding for areas such as universities (Horizon 2020, Erasmus+) and agriculture also contribute to the economy of minority language speaking regions and therefore indirectly benefit the survival of these languages. There is no indication that our nations would receive similar levels of investment from the UK Government.”⁹

15. Wales Arts International gave the example of Quebec as a region within a larger state which has been able to buy into European programmes, as they have done with Horizon 2020 and suggested that more could be done to explore this option for Wales. They wrote:

“We continue to argue the case for continued participation in EU transnational programmes such as Creative Europe or Erasmus+, and consider that participation in these programmes post Brexit should be considered at a regional level (i.e. Wales) if the UK level is not a viable option.”¹⁰

16. The National Dance Company Wales gave an example of the way in which European funding has enabled them to prosper and the need to continue to be part of European programmes which is typical of the responses the Committee received:

“One of the key ways in which companies like NDC Wales have enabled and developed links is via European funding schemes, such as Creative Europe, Horizons 2020, Erasmus+, Tandem and many others. These schemes have enabled Wales’ arts and cultural sector to create

⁷ Welsh Language Commissioner written evidence

⁸ Welsh Books Council written evidence

⁹ European Language Equality Network written evidence

¹⁰ Wales Arts International written evidence

distinctive and ambitious artistic projects, engage with the wider world, export and generate income.

WG could ensure continued participation for Wales in all major EU funding schemes, including influencing the future development and evolution of these programmes itself. Given the devolved nature of culture and education matters, WG could do this even if the UK Government does not wish to continue full participation in these programmes.”¹¹

17. The Committee explored the future funding opportunities for the sectors and organisations within the Committee’s remit. In 2017, the Conservative Party Manifesto committed to introducing a UK Shared Prosperity Fund to replace EU funds for poorer parts of the UK and “reduce inequalities across the four nations”. The Minister explained that should this funding be transferred to Wales, the arts funding element would be administered by a new body called Creative Wales.¹²

Welsh Government

18. The Welsh Government position has been set out in their policy paper “Securing Wales’ Future”:

“During the referendum campaign voters in Wales were assured that leaving the EU would not result in Wales being worse off and it is vital to public faith in political process that this promise is honoured... Significant investment in Wales is stimulated by a number of smaller EU programmes and we strongly believe Wales should continue to benefit from access to them from outside the EU. These include: Horizon 2020, ERASMUS+, Creative Europe and the WalesIreland Programme.”¹³

19. During the meeting, officials explained that there are ongoing discussions on continued membership of these programmes:

“The Cabinet Secretary for Finance will be meeting with his opposite numbers to discuss the future funding programmes, to influence the UK Government’s position on those. There is some common ground between Governments on continued access to these programmes ... the negotiations on the future relationships haven’t really started in earnest,

¹¹ National Dance Company Wales written evidence

¹² CWLC Committee, 18 October 2018, para 34

¹³ [Brexit: Securing Wales Future](#)

so it remains to be seen what the proposition is, but we continue to press for access to those programmes.”¹⁴

Our View

After leaving the EU, Wales must continue to receive the same level of funding that it would have had if the UK had remained in the EU.

EU funding has boosted our arts and heritage sectors and the creative industries. The legacy of this investment can be seen across the country. The current uncertainty about future funding is damaging to our creative industries in particular and more certainty on the finance available once we leave is essential.

The UK Government’s 2017 manifesto committed to establish a domestic successor to EU Structural Funds to “reduce inequalities between communities across our four nations” via a “UK Shared Prosperity Fund”. But to date there has been little detail about how the new fund will work. It is important for forward planning that the priorities and commitments for this fund are agreed as soon as possible.

The evidence showed it is vitally important for our arts and heritage sectors and our creative industries that Wales continues to participate in Horizon 2020, ERASMUS+ and Creative Europe. This is feasible because they are open to non-Member states. We heard of the example of Quebec participating in Horizon 2020 as a region within a nation. We think that this option should be taken up by the Welsh Government in the event that the UK decides to withdraw from the programme.

Remaining part of these schemes will give our creative industries the ability to collaborate on projects and compete for business on an international scale. It will also allow Wales to continue to raise its profile on the international stage, which is so important for the creative industries which compete globally.

Recommendation 1. The Welsh Government should continue to lobby the UK Government to remain part of Creative Europe, Horizon 2020 and Erasmus+ once we leave the EU. If this is not possible then the Welsh Government should pursue the option of membership using the precedent set by Quebec’s participation in Horizon 2020.

¹⁴ CWLC Committee, 18 October 2018, para 29

Access to skilled workers and freedom of movement for performers

20. Many of the organisations which took part in the consultation were concerned that the ending of the freedom of movement for workers could limit their potential to attract and retain the best talent from Europe.

21. For instance, Equity wrote that performers are some of the most mobile in the economy.¹⁵ Wales Arts International told us that Europe is a key source of talent which is vital to the success of the sector.¹⁶ The scale of the use of talent from the EU was highlighted by the National Dance Company Wales which recruits up to 50% of its dancers from Europe, they said “this mix is critical to the skills required to deliver the work”.¹⁷ Likewise, Sinfonia Cymru said that 20% of their musicians are from the EU, and the Association of British Orchestras put their percentage of EU members at 80%.¹⁸

22. Restricting freedom of movement will potentially affect, not only the loss of expertise and cultural learning but also the bottom line of creative businesses. The cost of applying for workers’ visas will add to the costs of small firms. Ffilm Cymru told the Committee that the creative sector is made up of 95% freelancers and SMEs and they “simply do not have the capacity to .. quickly adapt their business practices... to the post-Brexit market”.¹⁹

23. The Committee heard that if, in future, SMEs are required to obtain an Employment Sponsorship Licence, this process has a number of bureaucratic hurdles and takes time and money to establish. Currently there are “shortage occupations” which are listed by the UK Government and performing artists are included. These posts can be filled by any nationality under the UK Government’s Tier 2 visa scheme. The Committee heard suggestions that a similar scheme to fast track visas for performing artists should be explored if the free movement of labour is abolished.²⁰

24. Wales Arts International told the Committee that creative workers are mainly hired on short term, or atypical contracts. They called for “short-term visas for

¹⁵ Equity written evidence

¹⁶ Wales Arts International written evidence

¹⁷ National Dance Company Wales written evidence

¹⁸ Sinfonia Cymru written evidence

¹⁹ Ffilm Cymru written evidence

²⁰ Wales Arts International written evidence

artists to perform both within the European Union at large, but also for artists visiting the UK”.²¹ They warned that typical performing arts employment contracts are unlikely to meet the current requirement for a minimum earning threshold, which stands at £30,000²². For these reasons, and because contracts are arranged at short notice, the Welsh Government’s suggested option of freedom of movement for workers who have a job offer may not solve these problems.

Welsh Government

25. The Welsh Government told the Committee it recognises the importance of European workers’ skills to our economy. In its policy paper “Brexit and the fair movement of people”²³, it writes:

“EU nationals also make an important contribution to our creative industries and to cultural life in Wales... Our policy position outlines that future migration to the UK should be more closely linked to employment – those wishing to come to the UK should either have a job, or the ability to find one quickly.”

26. The paper highlighted the need to ensure any future immigration system is “more accessible to start-ups and small and medium sized enterprises, as a start-up may not have the robust human resources systems and policies in place to apply for (or maintain) a sponsor licence”. It went on to say that if a future system was to be based on the current Tier 2 (Skilled Worker) system, then:

“we strongly believe that controls must be proportionate, designed to support the needs of our economy and public services – the risk is that these are, instead, additional burdens and barriers to economic growth and social cohesion.”

27. The Minister told the Committee:

“Clearly, where there has been a workforce moving across Europe in the arts sector and in media sectors, it’s important that we can keep that movement happening. Co-productions with the rest of Europe have been an essential part of the activities of BBC Wales, S4C and all the independent producers, and it’s very important that this continues.”²⁴

²¹ CWLC Committee, 18 October 2018, para 198

²² www.gov.uk/tier-2-general/eligibility

²³ [Brexit and the Fair Movement of People](#)

²⁴ CWLC Committee, 18 October 2018, para 81

Our view:

Talented workers from the European Union provide a crucial skills mix for our creative industries. Replacing them with home grown talent will take time. Restricting freedom of movement for workers to Wales would take away an important exchange of learning and skills for our creative workers.

Any restrictions on the ability to employ European artists and workers will incur costs for our creative industries. The majority of employers in this sector are small and medium sized enterprises which may struggle to bear the additional bureaucratic burden of registering and administering visa schemes.

The nature of employment contracts in the arts sector means that they may not qualify for the minimum earning threshold currently required by the UK Government's Tier 2 visa scheme. Any proposals to extend or build on this system to accommodate the free movement of people in the arts sector will have to overcome the mobile, short term and short notice nature of the performing arts employment model.

Recommendation 2. The Welsh Government should continue to make the case for the freest possible arrangements for the movement of labour which is essential for the economic and cultural productivity of Wales' creative industry.

Recommendation 3. The Welsh Government should ensure that any future arrangements for enabling European workers to come to Wales and vice versa will not be financially and administratively prohibitive for small employers. The arrangements should also take into account the fact that the arts sector is more likely to employ people on atypical work contracts.

Loss of opportunities to profit from touring in Europe

28. Arts organisations rely on earnings from touring productions in Europe. Without the free movement of goods and people, touring companies face the financial and bureaucratic burden of organising visas for performers and the additional costs of customs documents related to transporting equipment.

29. Restrictions on freedom of movement will also reduce the income from touring performances in Europe on which many companies rely. Touring in Europe is attractive to companies in Wales because of its geographic proximity,

the lack of customs documentation required and the avoidance of double taxation because companies are treated as “Fiscally Resident” in Europe.²⁵

30. Stakeholders including Sinfonia Cymru told the Committee “anything that restricts, inhibits, or makes it more difficult to tour, will potentially be detrimental”.²⁶

31. The National Dance Company Wales wrote that “the restriction of movement of goods and people would limit the ability to generate revenue and attract talent”. Not only would this affect their profits - they earn between £60,000 and £100,000 in fees annually - it would also damage the profile of the company, their brand and diminish the profile of Wales abroad, if they could not tour.

32. Wales Arts International called for better data on the potential impact of a “no deal” Brexit for Welsh arts organisations. Eluned Haf said:

“So, I think we’re calling for a data exercise to be carried out. The Arts Council of England have done data to an extent, which has been very valuable. We replicated a similar exercise they did back in 2016. I would like to see that done in a more joined-up way, and not just within Wales, but actually within a UK and a European context, because of the impact on people being able to come and perform in our festivals, and work in our national dance company, who employ 50 per cent of their dancers from the EU.”²⁷

Welsh Government

33. The Welsh Government addressed the issue of touring productions at the meeting. The Minister was not optimistic that potential restriction of freedom of movement for goods and labour could be easily overcome if Wales does not remain part of the Single Market. He said:

“There will be a disincentive for those people because, clearly, they will have to surmount the difficulties that you’ve outlined, and I don’t see that we can avoid those issues. I can’t imagine we could establish some sort of agency that would look after all the individual performers that have taken advantage of the open market in artistic activity over the years, or replace the single market with a mechanism that could

²⁵ National Dance Company Wales written evidence

https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/work/taxes/income-taxes-abroad/index_en.htm

²⁶ Sinfonia Cymru written evidence

²⁷ CWLC Committee, 18 October 2018 para 146

overcome the kind of bureaucratic interference with people's movement that will be established if we leave the single market."²⁸

34. Officials agreed that although touring productions are counted as “temporary working” because they last less than a year, and so do not come under the migration system, there are still issues which need to be worked through.²⁹

Our View

The ability to generate income from touring productions in Europe is a vital part of our creative industry's business model. For instance, NoFitState circus, generated almost 40% of its total turnover in the last financial year from touring. We heard that any restrictions on touring would seriously jeopardise the viability of touring productions such as those of the National Dance Company Wales and British Orchestras.

Although touring is regarded as “temporary working” rather than immigration, there are still issues which need to be clarified and agreed to ensure the freedom to take touring productions to Europe is guaranteed. Otherwise, our creative industries will suffer financial losses which cannot easily be replaced by touring outside Europe or by engaging in other activities.

Only by remaining part of a single market, with the freedom of movement for goods and labour that this affords, would Welsh productions avoid incurring additional expenditure when touring Europe.

Recommendation 4. That the Welsh Government should prepare information and advice for the industry on the possible impact of restriction of the movement of goods and services. This should include a “one stop shop” for touring companies with information on European requirements for employment contracts, visas, transport of equipment, insurance and taxation.

Access to the Single Market and a single regulatory system

35. Access to the Single Market is vital for the commercial success of Wales' creative industries. Tariff free access is very lucrative for our businesses, 45% of UK

²⁸ CWLC Committee, 18 October 2018 para 102

²⁹ CWLC Committee, 18 October 2018 para 107

creative industries service exports are to the EU.³⁰ Co-productions with EU countries, such as film productions, offer the removal of import duties and taxes on equipment, as well as the opportunity to be classed as “national” films to meet quotas on homegrown productions.

36. Ffilm Cymru wrote that “UK qualifying films in 2016 generated 16.4% of the global box office for film, valued at £6.5 billion”.³¹ Wales co-produces more films with EU partners than other countries in the UK, leaving it more vulnerable to the effects of Brexit. For this reason, Ffilm Cymru have called for audio-visual services to be included in a future Free Trade Agreement as it has been classed as a “cultural exception” to date.

Licensing and common regulatory frameworks

37. All European businesses operate in the same regulatory system. Once we leave the EU, the UK will no longer have the ability to influence European legislation but will have to abide by it to be able to access European markets. The Committee was told of the potential problems this may cause for cultural and heritage organisations in Wales. The Welsh Books Council called on the Welsh Government to consider the impact on copyright protection and intellectual property within the publishing industry, which they said “could lead to an increased administrative burden and double taxation”³² in the event that UK and EU legislation are not the same. They called for any EU standards to be adopted by the UK.

38. The National Library for Wales (NLW) wrote that it “acquires published materials from locations in the EU to add to the national collections. Currently, 54% of NLW print subscriptions are from European suppliers... New customs duties, costs or import barriers could potentially affect the ability to collect relevant content”.³³ They also wrote that any changes to copyright law are likely to bring new restrictions on digitisation and access to library collections due to changes to copyright laws and increased tariffs on ICT support services.

39. Equity stressed that the work done by the EU on strengthening intellectual property rights for performers has significant bearing on protecting our creative

³⁰ Ffilm Cymru written evidence

³¹ Ffilm Cymru written evidence, this figures includes US studio-backed films that film here such as Star Wars

³² Welsh Books Council written evidence

³³ National Library for Wales written evidence

industry and securing performers' rights and income. They wrote that it is vital that the UK is able to influence copyright developments at the European level.³⁴

Welsh Government

40. The Committee heard about the work being done to ensure continued access to the Single Market and a single regulatory framework for those in the creative industries. For instance, the Welsh Government is working to ensure that the same protections will be in place once we leave the EU, under the EU Copyright Bill which is currently going through Parliament.³⁵ Officials said that the Ministerial Forum on EU Negotiations will be looking at “issues of joint regulatory alignments on those underpinning things like intellectual property and copyright just to try and secure a partnership arrangement with Europe that allows that seamless access”.³⁶

41. Amongst its six priorities for leaving the European Union, the Welsh Government is calling for, “continued full and unfettered access to the Single Market and participation in a Customs Union...”.³⁷ They wrote that their strategy has been to “Liaise with the UK Government DCMS in relation to cultural property regulations and new statutory instruments”.³⁸

Our view

Currently creative industries in the UK follow the same regulations on issues such as copyright, protection of intellectual property and licensing. Importantly, they generate considerable revenue from tariff free sales to the single market for goods. It is difficult to envisage the European co-productions in the film industry continuing at anything like their current level if the UK leaves the Single Market.

The benefits of a common regulatory system facilitate this Single Market. The system also means that our authors enjoy the same level of copyright protection for their intellectual property and our national institutions can access European literature without additional tax.

It is important that Wales remains part of a common regulatory framework, or, at the very least, a system of mutual regulatory recognition.

³⁴ Equity written evidence

³⁵ CWLC Committee, 18 October 2018, para 114

³⁶ CWLC Committee, 18 October 2018, para 117

³⁷ Welsh Government written evidence

³⁸ Welsh Government written evidence

Recommendation 5. In negotiations with the UK Government the Welsh Government should continue to make the case for remaining part of a common regulatory framework with Europe. The Welsh Government should ensure that there is no dilution of protection for intellectual property once we leave the EU.

Protection of the Welsh language and language learning

42. Wales has received direct and indirect funding from the European Union which helps support and promote the Welsh language and its use. The Committee heard evidence suggesting there is a risk to the Welsh language, particularly from the loss of indirect support in the form of funding which impacts on Welsh-speaking areas. For instance, there is a high concentration of Welsh speakers in post-industrial areas of West Wales and the valleys which qualify for European Structural Funding. Likewise, some rural areas in Wales also benefit from European Structural Funding, which supports Welsh speaking communities. These communities also benefit from the Rural Development Fund, Wales' Common Agricultural Policy funding, that supports family farms and the rural economy.

43. The Welsh Language Commissioner called on the Welsh Government to make plans as a matter of urgency to mitigate any detrimental effects of Brexit, she wrote:

“It is absolutely essential that Brexit does not undermine the efforts to create more Welsh speakers or to increase the use made of the Welsh language. In order to protect Welsh speakers, the Welsh Government must dedicate attention to the possible implications of Brexit for the Welsh language beyond the agriculture sector...”³⁹

44. She also highlighted the fact that language rights of Welsh speakers are derived from a number of sources, including the Human Rights Act which is based on the EU Convention on Human Rights. She warned that Brexit may ultimately affect Welsh speakers' ability to get redress if their rights are breached.⁴⁰

45. Meirion Prys Jones, the former Chief Executive of the Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity and also the Welsh Language Board, commented that the Welsh Government's proposals for supporting rural communities, as set out in

³⁹ Welsh Language Commissioner written evidence

⁴⁰ Welsh Language Commissioner written evidence

“Brexit and our land”⁴¹ were not sufficient to safeguard the Welsh language. He would like to see the maintenance of the Welsh Language named alongside the Government’s five principles in this policy area. He told the Committee:

“When you consider how many people in west Wales, north Wales and mid Wales speak Welsh in this industry... There are five main principles in this document, and language isn’t one of them. Now, there’s mention made in the document of the linguistic element, and it notes that these communities have a high percentage of Welsh speakers, but it isn’t a principle.”⁴²

46. The Committee also heard that the study of modern languages in Wales could be affected by Brexit. It has been reported that, Wales suffers from an undersupply of qualified professionals to meet our needs. Professor Gorrara in her evidence referenced a British Council report⁴³ that states: “recent shrinkage in modern foreign language provision has disguised an underlying shortage of teachers, with evidence that some schools are relying on teachers who are not qualified in the subject to bridge gaps”.⁴⁴

47. Currently European funding from the Erasmus+ scheme funds educational exchanges for teachers and students to European countries. For instance, “In 2016/17, Cardiff Council successfully secured €71,000 to support 38 teachers to study a language abroad. In total, Cardiff Council’s International School Linking department has secured funding for 129 teachers across Wales to learn a new or improve an existing language in a European partner country over a three-year period”.⁴⁵ Professor Gorrara argues that this not only improves linguistic confidence but also increases cultural knowledge.

48. Prof Gorrara described the Erasmus+ scheme as “Absolutely pivotal to the well-being—the linguistic and the intercultural well-being of Wales”. She also told the Committee that there has been an increase in what she described as “linguaphobia” as a result of Brexit. She described:

“a perception that if you’re not an English speaker and you speak other languages, that somehow you’re not a fully-fledged part of the community. And certainly, we’ve seen that in anecdotes around people

⁴¹ https://beta.gov.wales/sites/default/files/consultations/2018-07/brexit-and-our-land-consultation-document_0.pdf

⁴² CWLC Committee, 18 October 2018, para 295

⁴³ https://wales.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/language_trends_wales_2016-17_0.pdf

⁴⁴ Quoted in Prof Gorrara written evidence

⁴⁵ Prof Gorrara written evidence

being abused for speaking other languages in the street, particularly on public transport and elsewhere.”⁴⁶

49. She also referenced research carried out by the British Council which found that around a third of schools surveyed believe that Brexit is having a negative impact on parental and pupil attitudes towards modern foreign languages.⁴⁷

Welsh Government

50. The Welsh Government told the Committee their strategy has been to “work with agriculture and across Welsh Government to ensure culture, heritage and historic environment are taken into account in new arrangements”. This is set out in “Brexit: Our Land”:

“The Welsh language is an inseparable part of the social fabric of parts of rural Wales. Cultural connections with farming across Wales are strong and agriculture plays an important role in sustaining the Welsh language. Indeed, nearly a third of individuals in land management sectors speak the language regularly (higher than any other employment category).”

51. The Welsh Government has stressed the importance of maintaining current rural funding levels to the UK Government. In “Brexit: Securing Wales’ Future”. They write:

“Securing resources is not only about supporting farming... Our languages, our culture and many of our traditions as a country are sustained in the countryside and it is here that EU withdrawal may be most dramatically and quickly apparent. It is vital that rural interests are protected and feature strongly as Wales works towards a future outside the EU.”

52. On the importance of continuing to belong to the Erasmus+ scheme for increasing language ability and cultural exchange, they write:

“We believe that Wales and indeed the whole of the UK should continue to participate in international exchanges such as ERASMUS+ and its successors after the UK leaves the EU... We advocate the retention of reciprocal arrangements which enable EU students to study at UK institutions, and vice-versa, when the UK is outside the EU.”

⁴⁶ CWLC Committee, 18 October 2018, para 262

⁴⁷ Prof Gorrara, written evidence

53. During our meeting, officials stressed that the negotiations on funding had not yet started in earnest.

Our View

The Committee heard that both direct and indirect support for the Welsh language could be lost once we leave the EU. Our rural communities have received funding for over four decades under the Common Agricultural Policy. The Welsh Government's proposals for replacing this support do not prioritise the need to maintain and grow the numbers of Welsh speakers. The proposals for financial support in exchange for "public goods" from our land managers should make explicit reference to the fact that strong rural economies keep our language alive.

Welsh is spoken in some of our most deprived post-industrial communities in West Wales. These areas have benefitted from EU Structural Funds. If these communities see a downturn, it will have a negative impact on the numbers of Welsh speakers. We need to ensure that those living in these communities, which include a majority of Welsh speakers, continue to have access to employment and opportunities, which this support has provided.

We need a better understanding of the impact of Brexit on Welsh speakers and our Welsh speaking communities to plan for strengthening the viability of our language.

We also heard that the referendum has affected attitudes towards other cultures and the take up of modern languages learning. It is vital that we promote Wales as a multicultural and multilingual nation. Negative attitudes to language learning and the decline in modern languages skills will leave Wales in a weaker position at the very time we need these skills to increase our international trading.

Recommendation 6. The Welsh Government should undertake a risk assessment on the impact of Brexit on Welsh speaking communities; the Welsh language and language learning in schools and universities in Wales.

Wales' International standing and participation in networks

54. The Committee heard that leaving the EU will reduce opportunities for Wales to raise its profile on the international stage. These activities, which highlight our

cultural and academic strengths, go a long way to attracting tourism and investment.

55. For instance, the Association of British Orchestras wrote that orchestras “have contributed to the UK Government and devolved administrations’ ambitions for ‘soft power’ and cultural exchange”.⁴⁸ Literature in Wales wrote:

“Limiting access to long-established European networks and funding programmes in the culture, education and research sectors would isolate Wales further, damage its ability to perform and deliver and would likely stop new opportunities in culture, creative industries, film and TV and limit Wales’ global reach. It would make Wales less visible to the rest of the world, at a time when more should be done to raise visibility and awareness for Wales and the Welsh language.”⁴⁹

56. The Welsh Books Council called for the Welsh Government to do more to prepare for this loss of access to the international stage:

“Historically, Wales was seen as a unique and distinct member of the European family of small nations; but now will be seen as part of Britain. WG needs to prepare for how it will continue to promote Wales as a unique destination.”⁵⁰

European networking opportunities

57. The Committee received evidence of the importance of sharing expertise through collaborative projects with other European countries. For instance, Wales Arts International emphasised that cultural organisations benefit from peer learning opportunities in other countries and the ability to collaborate in projects, as well as gaining financially from being part of Creative Europe projects.⁵¹

58. Wales Arts International stressed the importance of remaining part of European networks such as On the Move, Informal European Theatre Meeting and Culture Action Europe. This was for exploiting cultural and business opportunities. They wrote:

“Wales’ continued participation in a range of international networks remains important. They provide intelligence and information about

⁴⁸ Association of British Orchestras written evidence

⁴⁹ Literature in Wales written evidence

⁵⁰ Welsh Books Council written evidence

⁵¹ CWLC Committee, 18 October 2018, para 175

international markets and opportunities. Such intelligence will be vital if we're to influence future debate and develop new cultural and trading relationships in Europe and further afield."⁵²

59. Eluned Haf, from Wales Arts International, told the Committee it was extremely important for Wales to continue to participate in activities at a European level, saying: "if we're not members of these networks, particularly after Brexit, I foresee great trouble for our sector".⁵³

60. Museum Wales described the benefits from formal and informal cultural networks such as the OpenArch partnership and Network of Museum Organisations. They gave examples of the learning opportunities for their staff and the ability to showcase Welsh culture on an international stage by hosting conferences. They wrote:

"we are dependent on partnerships with museums and universities in European countries to help us to interpret them and our historical and archaeological collections. Our expertise in museology and cultural learning is recognized beyond the UK and links with us are increasingly sought by European colleagues."⁵⁴

Welsh Government

61. The Welsh Government's strategy has been to "develop new networks and relationships both in Europe and around the world to promote culture in Wales, working with the British Council, the European Heads of Heritage forum and others".⁵⁵

62. In response to questions about how the Museum's networks can be maintained, officials from the Welsh Government told the Committee:

"There's a plethora of different networks that our partner organisations, such as the museum, are engaged with. Not all of them are EU constructs, some sit outside the EU, and the strong feeling that we get in terms of engagement with the sector is that they are doing

⁵² Wales Arts International written evidence

⁵³ CWLC Committee, 18 October 2018, para 178

⁵⁴ Museum Wales written evidence

⁵⁵ Welsh Government written evidence

everything that they can to maintain those networks going forward, and we're obviously encouraging that."⁵⁶

Our view

Alongside funding opportunities, Wales benefits enormously from its current ability to participate in European programmes and partnerships. These are very helpful for our cultural institutions to gain and exchange knowledge, strengthen academic research, pursue collaborative business opportunities and enhance Wales' profile on the international stage. Losing access to our international platform as one of a collection of small nations in the EU means that in future, Wales will have to work harder to be recognised. We must continue to seek to raise our profile as a cultural innovator.

Continued access to formal and informal networking opportunities is important for Wales as it seeks to increase recognition of our achievements and explore new markets once we leave the European Union. Leaving the EU does not prevent us from having a role in these networks as a sub-national member.

We are calling on the Welsh Government to carry out an assessment of the "soft" benefits of membership of European partnerships and an exploration of opportunities for continued involvement.

Recommendation 7. The Welsh Government should carry out a survey of the "soft" benefits to cultural organisations of membership of informal and formal European networks and develop options for continued membership of these networks to raise the profile of our arts, heritage and cultural organisations on the international stage.

Annex A

Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee Meeting

Date	Name and Organisation
18 October 2018	Dafydd Elis-Thomas AM, Minister for Culture, Tourism and Sport, Welsh Government Jason Thomas, Director of Culture, Sport and Tourism, Welsh Government

⁵⁶ CWLC Committee, 18 October 2018, para 73

Simon Brindle, Deputy Director, European Transition, Welsh Government

Eluned Haf, Head of Wales Arts International

Pauline Burt, Chief Executive, Ffilm Cymru Wales

Zelie Flach, European Officer, Wales Arts International

Meirion Prys Jones, Former Chief Executive, Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity and former Chief Executive of the Welsh Language Board.

Prof Claire Gorrara, School of Modern Languages, Cardiff University

A call evidence was published on the website on 11 September 2018.

Organisations were invited to set out:

- The possible impacts of Brexit in these areas that are within the competence of the National Assembly for Wales and within the remit of the Committee as set out above.
- The possible impacts of Brexit in these areas that are of particular relevance to Wales.
- The Welsh Government's preparedness for Brexit in these areas.

Written responses were received from:

Ffilm Cymru Wales

European Language Equality Network

Sinfonia Cymru

National Dance Company Wales

Literature Wales

Welsh Government

The Welsh Language Commissioner

National Museum Wales

Historic Environment Group EU Transition Sub-Group

The Welsh Books Council

Wales Arts International

Cardiff School of Modern Languages

Teledwyr Annibynnol Cymru (TAC) / Welsh Independent Producers

National Library Wales

Equity
