



ON  
THE  
MOVE

## **Cultural Mobility Forum 2026 in Skopje, Republic of North Macedonia**

29-30 April 2026

On the Move is the international information network dedicated to artistic and cultural mobility, gathering 90 members from 33 countries. Since 2002, On the Move provides regular, up-to-date and free information on mobility opportunities, conditions and funding, and advocates for the value of cross-border cultural mobility. Co-funded by the European Union and the French Ministry of Culture, On the Move is implementing an ambitious multi-annual programme to build the capacities of local, regional, national, European and international stakeholders for the sustainable development of our cultural ecosystems.

Each year On the Move proposes a Cultural Mobility Forum to collectively investigate international artistic and cultural mobility trends. As a unique knowledge platform, the network works together with its members and partners to design thematic panel discussions and contextualise global mobility issues.

### **Focus 2026: Cultural Mobility Justice**

Cultural mobility justice examines and challenges the systemic inequities that determine who can move, create and participate within the global cultural landscape. It exposes how visa restrictions, economic disparities, and enduring colonial, ableist and patriarchal power structures disproportionately limit the mobility of artists and culture professionals – particularly those from marginalised communities, burdened by precarious working conditions, family responsibilities, or personal constraints, or from non-Western contexts.

This framework advocates for equitable access to resources, including visas, funding, information, and professional (digital) opportunities, while amplifying the voices of those most affected by mobility injustices. It demands alternative approaches to curation, cultural exchange, and the dismantling of institutional gatekeeping that perpetuates inequality. Ultimately, cultural mobility justice seeks to reimagine and redistribute the power dynamics of global circulation, ensuring that mobility becomes a fundamental right rather than a privilege reserved for a select few.

The international circulation of artists and culture professionals is a critical arena where mobility justice reveals deep-seated inequities. While globalisation promises borderless exchange, the reality remains stratified: who gains access, under what conditions, and who faces exclusion reflects historical colonialism, economic inequality, and institutional control.



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The 2026 edition of the Forum will explore these systemic inequities, interrogating how mobility within the cultural sector reinforces disparities and imbalances. Participants will examine how transnational cultural participation is not universally accessible but shaped by visa regimes, economic barriers, geopolitical hierarchies, and other structural constraints. The conversations will highlight alternative models of circulation, from self-organised networks and decolonial practices to policy reforms and solidarity-based economies. By centring artist-led initiatives, fair labour standards, and equitable visa policies, the Forum aims to envision a fairer framework for international cultural exchange. At a time when independent cultural cooperation in Southeast Europe (SEE) faces growing challenges, the Forum will relay the voices of cultural practitioners in the region to address a deteriorating political climate that threatens their mobility and creative freedom.

For this Forum, On the Move is proud to partner with one of its members, Kooperativa – Regional Platform for Culture, a network of organisations and national platforms dedicated to independent culture and contemporary art in SEE. Founded by 21 independent cultural organisations from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Croatia, Kosovo, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Slovenia, Kooperativa now brings together 40 active members working across all areas of contemporary cultural and artistic practice.

Kooperativa's work focuses on fostering collaboration and exchange through joint projects, strengthening networks among advocates of independent culture, and delivering information and educational initiatives. The platform also plays a critical role in advocating for cultural policy reforms that enhance regional and international cooperation, while working to establish a sustainable framework for long-term collaboration and development among independent cultural organisations in SEE. A key part of this effort involves engaging in dialogue with stakeholders to address the conditions for cultural workers and ensure their voices are heard.



## Programme

**Wednesday, 29 April**

**Cultural Mobility Forum 2026**

- 09:00-10:00 Registration & welcome coffee  
[Albanian Theatre Skopje](#), 2C3Q+QFR, Vojdan Chernodrinski, Skopje  
[\[Google Map\]](#)
- 10:00-10:30 Opening and welcoming words
- 10:30-11:00 Keynote Speech by **Marijana Cvetković** (Stanica/Station – Service for Contemporary Dance, Nomad Dance Academy)  
*Mobility Justice: Fairer Policies, New Practices, and Radical Solidarity*
- 11:00-12:30 Panel discussion: *Artistic Autonomy and the Balkans*  
 With **Sara Whyatt** (Freemuse) and **Haris Pašović** (Sarajevo Fest)  
 Moderator **Mateja Lazar** (Motovila)  
 Rapporteur **Sviatlana Haidaljonak** (Warsaw Observatory of Culture)
- 11:00-12:30 Long Table: *Safe Havens: Artist Residencies in Turbulent Times*  
 Seed speaker **Theresa Ridder** (SWAN Emergency residencies)  
 Moderator **Maik Müller** (Martin Roth-Initiative)  
 Rapporteur **Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka** (Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art)
- 11:00-12:30 Long Table: *Building our Fairness Capacities*  
 Seed speaker **Sabrina Kamili** (Fondation Hiba, K&Co)  
 Moderator **Kalina Dukovska** (Laboratorium)  
 Rapporteur **Antonija Letinić** (Kultura Nova)
- 12:30-14:30 Lunch break & venue change
- 14:30-15:00 Check-in and moving forward  
[MKC Youth Cultural Centre](#), 15 MK, Dimitar Vlahov Walk, Skopje  
[\[Google Map\]](#)
- 15:00-16:30 Panel discussion: *Cultural Mobility Funding: Biases and Blind Spots*  
 With **Marina Mussapi** (Moleskine Foundation) and **Jon Opie** (Acme)

Moderator **Maria Vlachou** (Acesso Cultura)  
Rapporteur **Lorena Copil** (Centrul Cultural Clujean)

- 15:00-16:30 Long Table: *Navigating Visa Barriers in Cultural Mobility*  
Seed speaker **Marie Le Sourd** (On the Move)  
Moderator **Sebastian Hoffmann** (touring artists, Internationales Theaterinstitut)  
Rapporteur **Florent Mehmeti** (Teatri ODA, HAPU Festival)
- 15:00-16:30 Long Table: *Mobility Justice – Invisible No More*  
Seed speaker **Abdullah AlKafri** (Ettijahat)  
Moderator **Jordi Baltà Portolés** (independent expert)  
Rapporteur **Argyro Toumazou** (D6:EU)
- 17:00-18:30 Harvesting insights from rapporteurs and participants  
Rapporteurs **Sviatlana Haidalionak** (Warsaw Observatory of Culture), **Antonija Letinić** (Kultura Nova), **Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka** (Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art), **Florent Mehmeti** (Kosovo), **Argyro Toumazou** (Cyprus), and **Lorena Copil** (Romania)  
Moderator **Yohann Floch** (On the Move)
- 18:30 Conclusions and announcement of the 2027 edition of On the Move's Cultural Mobility Forum
- 18:45 Reception with finger food and drinks

**Thursday, 30 April**

**Cultural visits and curated discussions**

These parallel visits invite participants to move through Skopje's artistic landscape and discover how the local arts scene takes shape, resists, and evolves. From fragile and contested cultural spaces to self-organised structures of solidarity, and into the streets, buildings, and shared spaces of the city, each visit offers a different entry point into the conditions of artistic practice in Skopje and North Macedonia today. Together, they trace how bodies, spaces, and collective practices engage with social transformation through lived experiences, situated practices, and ongoing negotiation.

- 09:30-13:00      *Performing Public Space: Artistic Practices in the City*  
with [Faculty of things that can't be learned](#) / [AKTO festival for contemporary arts](#)
- 09:30-12:30      *Holding the Line: Practices, Structures and Solidarity in the Visual Arts*  
with [Centar Jadro](#)
- 09:30-12:30      *Anatomy of a Performing Arts Scene: Bodies, Spaces and Autonomy*  
with [Lokomotiva - Centre for New Initiative in Arts and Culture](#)
- 09:30-12:30      *Session on the Music Scene*  
with [Creative Europe Desk - North Macedonia](#) and [Password Production](#)

**Keynote: Cultural Mobility Justice: Fairer Policies, New Practices, and Radical Solidarity**

29 April, 10:30-11:00

[Albanian Theatre Skopje](#), main stage [[Google Map](#)]

This opening keynote will examine how cultural mobility can – and must – be reimagined through **fairer policies, transformative practices, and new forms of solidarity**. As global inequalities deepen, the cultural sector faces urgent questions: How can we dismantle the barriers that restrict movement for marginalised artists and practitioners? What policies are needed to redress historical injustices and ensure equitable access to opportunities? And how might we forge new solidarities – across borders, disciplines, and communities – to challenge systemic exclusion?

Drawing on real-world examples, policy innovations, and grassroots strategies, this keynote will explore concrete pathways toward a more just cultural ecosystem – one where mobility is not a privilege but a shared right, and where solidarity is not performative but transformative.

Speaker:

**Marijana Cvetković** is a producer, curator and lecturer. She is a co-founder of Station Service for Contemporary Dance and Nomad Dance Academy, self-organised platforms dedicated to the development of contemporary dance and performing arts in post-Yugoslavia. Additionally, she serves as a cultural activist within the independent cultural scene of Serbia, where she co-founded platforms such as *druga scena*, Magacin Cultural Centre, Association of Independent Culture of Serbia, and Platform for the Commons ‘Zajedničko’.

Working as a lecturer at the University of Arts in Belgrade and Université Lumière Lyon 2, as well as within many informal education platforms, she shares knowledge in curatorial studies, cultural policies, and arts production. Her main interests are self-organisation, self-management, Yugoslav cultural policies, the political aspects of cultural work, institutional transformation, and working conditions in arts and culture.

## Panel discussion: Artistic Autonomy and the Balkans

29 April, 11:00-12:30

[Albanian Theatre Skopje](#), main stage [[Google Map](#)]

This panel will explore the realities of **cultural mobility practice in the Balkans**, where cross-border cooperation is shaped by complex socio-political legacies, economic precarity, and the challenges of transnational collaboration.

Cultural practitioners in the Balkans – several of whom have direct experience of detention, expulsion, and targeting by authoritarian regimes – are confronting a deteriorating political climate that threatens their transnational mobility and artistic freedom. In Serbia, for example, independent cultural organisations supporting democratic movements are under increasing pressure from authorities, while across the region cultural workers face systematic restrictions on their movement and cross-border work. These political pressures, combined with long-standing infrastructural barriers, are creating a concerning pattern of mobility restrictions that not only undermine individual liberties but also severely hinder cultural cooperation across Southeast Europe.

A key focus will be the role of Balkan diasporas worldwide in enabling and sustaining international cultural projects. How do these networks facilitate access to global opportunities – and what limitations do they face? What tensions emerge between local artistic priorities and external expectations? And how might transnational solidarity genuinely empower artistic communities in the region? By centring voices from the Balkans and its diasporas, this discussion seeks to dismantle stereotypes and envision **equitable models of collaboration** – ones that honour autonomy while nurturing meaningful connection.

### Panellists:

**Sara Whyatt** is Research Director at the arts freedom organisation Freemuse. She headed PEN International's freedom of expression programme for over 20 years before becoming a freelance consultant in 2013. Since then she has contributed her expertise to numerous organisations working in the field of artistic freedom. She is a member of the Expert Facility on the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and is also an Expert working on the Council of Europe Directorate for Democracy's Free to Create-Create to be Free initiative.

**Haris Pašović** is a theatre and film director and the Director of Sarajevo Fest. His theatre productions have been presented in more than 20 countries worldwide, including at the

Edinburgh International Festival, Festival d'Avignon, Singapore Arts Festival, National Arts Festival (South Africa), UK City of Culture Derry/Londonderry, and many others. He is the creator of the Sarajevo Red Line, a kilometre-long installation of 11,541 red chairs in central Sarajevo, commemorating each person killed during the siege. His documentary *Greta*, about an Auschwitz survivor, has been shown at festivals internationally, including the New York Jewish Film Festival. Pašović founded the Sarajevo Film Festival in 1993 and directed the International Theatre Festival MES Sarajevo. He served as Director of Mittelfest, Italy, and is Artistic Director of the East-West Centre Sarajevo, as well as a tenured Professor of Directing at the Academy of Performing Arts in Sarajevo. He currently serves as Chair of the European Festivals for Emerging Artists Jury.

Moderator:

**Mateja Lazar**, co-founder and director of Motovila institute, is an expert in international cooperation in the cultural and creative sectors (CCSs). She specialises in EU programmes and policies and has over 20 years of experience in consultancy and training aimed at strengthening the capacities of CCSs and promoting cross-sectoral and transnational cooperation. She is head of Creative Europe Desk Slovenia and actively involved in European networks, in particular Culture Action Europe and On the Move, where she also serves as a board member.

## Long Table: Safe Havens: Artist Residencies in Turbulent Times

29 April, 11:00-12:30

[Albanian Theatre Skopje](#), small stage [[Google Map](#)]

Artist residencies have long been a cornerstone of artistic development, but their importance is magnified in times of crisis. On the Move's research into the challenges faced by **at-risk and displaced arts professionals** has highlighted the critical role of artist residencies at every stage of temporary or permanent relocation. From emergency hosting to long-term integration into a new cultural ecosystem, artist-in-residence programmes provide vital support, fostering the agency and autonomy of displaced artists. Through peer-to-peer mentorship, professional development, and community-building, these programmes create supportive environments that help artists navigate the complexities of relocation, including legal and mental health support.

This Long Table discussion will examine the evolving **role of artist residencies in today's landscape**, exploring both the challenges they face and the threats confronting arts professionals. It will also highlight how residencies actively contribute to shaping responses in times of crisis, ensuring that creative practice continues to flourish even in turbulent times.

### Seed speaker:

**Theresa Ridder** is a performance artist, visual artist, and residency host. Theresa is the founder and host of two artist residences in Sweden. In 2022, she initiated SWAN Emergency residencies in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, where she currently works as a project manager. In this role she coordinated safe residences in Sweden for artists in conflict zones by establishing a collaboration between SWAN and Artists at Risk (AR), matching 116 artists to SWAN ER residencies. She is also a board member of SWAN.

### Moderator:

**Maik Müller** is head of the Martin Roth-Initiative, a protection and relocation programme for artists at risk initiated by Institute für Auslandsbeziehungen (ifa) and Goethe-Institut and funded by the German Federal Foreign Office. Before this role he worked for ten years in the human rights sector, especially on the issue of protection and support for human rights defenders at risk. He holds a master's degree in Latin American Regional Studies as well as a postgraduate diploma in psycho-social intervention in situations of political violence and catastrophes. As a certificated professional mediator and coach with over ten years leadership experience working with people from repressive contexts, he contributes to counter the impacts of repression.



## Long Table: Building our Fairness Capacities

29 April, 11:00-12:30

[Albanian Theatre Skopje](#), meeting room [[Google Map](#)]

This discussion will invite participants to share and explore **capacity-building initiatives, training programmes, academies, and mentoring schemes** designed to empower cultural practitioners in implementing fairer, more equitable practices. These programmes play a crucial role in addressing systemic inequities – from access to resources and inclusive decision-making to ethical labour practices and decolonial approaches in the cultural sector.

Participants will be encouraged to share experiences and critical reflections on what has succeeded, what obstacles remain, and how these initiatives might be scaled, adapted, or refined to **better support marginalised communities**. Key questions will guide the discussion: How can professional development programmes move beyond tokenistic inclusion to drive genuine structural change? What mentorship models prioritise the voices and needs of those most impacted by systemic injustice? And how can we foster cross-border and interdisciplinary collaboration to collectively strengthen fairness capacities?

By the end of the session, we aim to identify gaps in current professional development programmes and envision new approaches that contribute to a more equitable, accessible and supportive cultural ecosystem.

### Seed speaker:

**Sabrina Kamili** is Head of Development at Fondation HIBA (Morocco), and co-founder of K&Co (consultancy) and 4S (NGO). Based in Rabat, she works on cultural policy and capacity-building within broader development frameworks, with particular attention to the intersections between creative economies and gender considerations. She acted as a local expert in the development of the European Union’s multiannual support programme for the cultural and creative sectors, currently implemented in Morocco. She has contributed to two sectoral studies on cultural value chains in Morocco, in collaboration with the HEM Research Centre and Mohammed VI Polytechnic University (UM6P), and advises cultural organisations, donors and public stakeholders on programme design and impact. Previously, she was Head of the Moroccan Music Export Office (2017–2018), Development Officer at L’Observatoire (local NGO), and a member of the Moroccan Cinematographic Center’s fund allocation committee for film festivals (2021–2022).



Moderator:

**Kalina Dukovska** is a proactive and multilingual researcher and cultural worker based in Skopje, North Macedonia. Deeply engaged in the intersection of socio-cultural work, youth participation, and research-based activism, Kalina is part of the executive team of Лабораториум (Laboratorium) a cultural and educational centre in Skopje that fosters independent art and civic imagination through co-creation and regional cooperation. In this role, she coordinates cultural programmes, supports grassroots initiatives, and facilitates inclusive dialogue spaces for young people and marginalised communities. In 2024, Kalina led the Laboratorium team as a finalist in the New European Bauhaus awards for the cultural project that Laboratorium represented.

She also serves on the Executive Committee of Reset!Network, a European network of independent cultural and media organisations, thinkers, artists, and activists working toward systemic alternatives through transdisciplinary exchange and experimentation. In parallel, Kalina is a researcher at European Policy Institute-Skopje, where she contributes to projects on EU-Western Balkan relations, democratic resilience, and a just transition. Her broader aim is to contribute to the democratic, ecological and cultural renewal of the region by bridging policy, research and community-based practice.

**Panel discussion: Cultural Mobility Funding – Biases and Blind Spots**

29 April, 15:00-16:30

[MKC Youth Cultural Centre](#), Cinema Frosina [[Google Map](#)]

As part of On the Move’s ongoing work with public and private funders, a continuous dialogue takes place to address the persistent challenges and evolving priorities shaping how cultural mobility is supported – from green and virtual mobility to values-based approaches. This panel discussion will critically examine funding methodologies that seek to address ingrained biases and overlooked barriers in grant-making.

At a time when societies are confronting overlapping social, cultural and economic crises, some of the most effective responses are emerging from the creative sector. **Forward-looking funders** support initiatives that operate at the **intersection of art, social action and community development**, tackling urgent challenges such as social exclusion, mental health, education and civic engagement through imaginative, inclusive and locally rooted approaches. Yet, despite their impact, socially engaged practitioners remain structurally fragile: often underfunded, reliant on volunteer labour, and stretched across multiple roles and responsibilities. Their intersectional work seldom fits neatly into traditional funding categories or evaluation frameworks, leaving much of its value unseen and unsupported, even as it helps communities retain their humanity in systems increasingly driven by efficiency, metrics and short-term outcomes. Funders explore new ways of representing and recognising their impacts.

Central to this panel discussion is the **trust-based funding model**, which shifts power dynamics by prioritising confidence in grantees over rigid control. This approach challenges traditional practices – such as overly restrictive eligibility criteria, excessive bureaucracy, or burdensome reporting – that often exclude less experienced arts workers or those facing accessibility challenges. By streamlining processes and reducing administrative hurdles, trust-based funding aims to foster freedom, equity and efficiency, ultimately empowering recipients to direct resources where they are most needed. Another key focus is the **randomised selection process**, a method designed to minimise bias by incorporating chance into decision-making. Unlike conventional evaluation systems, which may be influenced by unconscious prejudices or institutional preferences, randomisation offers a neutral, transparent, and fairer alternative. While not without its own complexities, this model prioritises equity and efficiency, ensuring that opportunities are distributed without favour or exclusion.

Through shared reflection, participants will consider how these and other innovative approaches can redress imbalances in cultural mobility funding – moving beyond well-intentioned but flawed systems toward models that truly centre fairness, accessibility and trust.

Panellists:

**Marina Mussapi** is the Chief Operating Officer at the Moleskine Foundation, an organisation that champions creativity as a tool for social transformation and works to inspire a new generation of creative thinkers and doers. With over a decade of experience in strategic planning and cultural project management, she has collaborated with museums, theatres, festivals, and grassroots organisations in Italy and internationally. Guided by a deep belief in the power of culture to address complex issues and foster equity and resilience, Marina has consistently sought to support institutions that challenge themselves to remain relevant to evolving societal needs, fostering community driven initiatives and empowering underrepresented voices. Before joining the Foundation, she worked at BASE Milano (2016–2022), leading institutional fundraising and educational programmes. A Milan native, she studied Cultural Economics and Management at Bocconi University and holds a Master’s in Management of Creative Business Processes from Copenhagen Business School.

**Jon Opie** is Head of Artist Support for Acme, a London-based organisation providing over 500 affordable long-term studios for visual artists and a programme of international residencies hosting 40-50 artists annually. He oversees Acme’s relationships with artists, enabling them to sustain their studio practices and careers. Previously he was the Deputy Director of Jerwood Arts where he collaborated with organisations across art forms to create professional and creative development opportunities for artists, makers, curators and producers. He led on creating innovative awards, bursaries and fellowships, centring artists’ needs, care, and inclusive practices. For eight years he was a Trustee of Cardboard Citizens Theatre Company and is now a Trustee of the Live Art Development Agency, dedicated to the development of Live Art research, practice and infrastructure.

Moderator:

**Maria Vlachou** is a founding member and current Executive Director of Acesso Cultura. She is the author of the books *What have we got to do with it? The political role of cultural organisations* (2022, in Portuguese) and *Musing on Culture: Management, Communication and our Relationship with People* (2013, in English), as well as the bilingual (pt/en) blog Musing on Culture. She is the manager of the Facebook group Museum texts / Textos em museus and co-manager of the blog Museums and Migration. She is also a member of the Board of the international museum professionals network Solidarity in Action.



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In the past, she was Communications Director of São Luiz Municipal Theatre and Head of Communication of Pavilion of Knowledge – Ciência Viva (Lisbon). She was a board member of ICOM Portugal (2005-2014) and editor of its bulletin, and has collaborated with different programmes of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. She participated in the European project RESHAPE within the group 'Arts and Citizenship'.



## Long Table: Navigating Visa Barriers in Cultural Mobility

29 April, 15:00-16:30

[MKC Youth Cultural Centre](#), Pocket Cinema [[Google Map](#)]

This Long Table discussion confronts one of the most urgent and unjust obstacles in cultural mobility: visa discrimination. For artists and culture professionals, the ability to work, collaborate, or grow internationally is too often dictated by **passport privilege, bureaucratic hurdles, and systemic exclusion**. From rejected visas and exorbitant application fees to arbitrary refusals based on nationality or economic status, these barriers reinforce global inequities – limiting who gets to move, who gets to be seen, and who gets to thrive.

Participants will be invited to share their experiences – including **workarounds, solidarity networks, and legal strategies** that artists and culture professionals have used to navigate or overcome these barriers. The discussion will also explore how institutions, funders and peers can better support those facing visa discrimination, ensuring that such efforts move beyond tokenism or performative allyship.

A critical focus will be the tensions arising from illiberal or populist governments that weaponize cross-border mobility – whether through restrictive visa policies, nationalist rhetoric, or bureaucratic sabotage – to control artistic expression or suppress dissent. How can arts workers resist such instrumentalisation while still pursuing international collaboration?

What would truly equitable mobility policies look like? And how can we collectively advocate for their implementation – even in contexts where governments actively undermine fair movement?

By centring first-hand accounts and collective problem-solving, this discussion aims to expose the human cost of visa injustices – including those amplified by political manipulation – while brainstorming actionable solutions, from grassroots advocacy to institutional accountability and transnational solidarity networks.

Seed speaker:

**Marie Le Sourd** has since 2012 been the Secretary General of On the Move, the cultural mobility information and advocacy network active in Europe and worldwide. She was elected Board member of Culture Action Europe in June 2025. Previously, Marie Le Sourd worked for twelve years in Southeast Asia, first in Singapore for the Asia-Europe Foundation as lead

manager of the Cultural Department and then as Director of the French Cultural Centre in Yogyakarta-Indonesia.

Over the years Marie has built a knowledge base on international cultural cooperation, funding schemes for the mobility of artists and cultural professionals, cultural networks, and web resources. In this work she is interested in the multidimensional impact of mobility on artists and cultural professionals, and in evaluation processes linked to these.

Moderator:

**Sebastian Hoffmann** works for the German Centre of the International Theatre Institute (ITI), where he coordinates the ‘touring artists’ help desk service on the administrative regulations of cross-border activities to/from Germany in the cultural sector. He studied North American Studies and Film Studies at FU Berlin and Reed College (USA) and has worked as an agent and promoter in the music sector and as a consultant at Music Pool Berlin.

## Long Table: Cultural Mobility Justice – Invisible No More

29 April, 15:00-16:30

[MKC Youth Cultural Centre](#), Gallery [[Google Map](#)]

This Long Table discussion will turn the spotlight on artists and culture professionals who have been **systematically sidelined or rendered invisible** within the cultural sector. From **disabled artists and those at risk to parents, practitioners from European overseas territories, Indigenous creators, and others pushed to the margins**, these voices are too often excluded – not just from international visibility and mobility opportunities, but from shaping the aesthetic, intellectual and structural future of the cultural and creative sectors.

The discussion will explore how to dismantle the barriers that prevent these artists from fully participating, leading and innovating. Participants are invited to share strategies and visions for making the cultural sector not only more representative and inclusive, but one where marginalised voices are actively empowered to drive change.

Key areas of focus will include redesigning funding, programming, and professional networks to centre these perspectives, as well as developing new models of collaboration and advocacy. These approaches must ensure that diversity is not merely represented but meaningfully integrated into the sector’s decision-making and creative processes.

By amplifying these conversations, the discussion aims to challenge the status quo and co-create pathways toward a cultural landscape where no one is invisible – and where every voice can thrive, contribute, and redefine what culture looks and feels like.

### Seed speaker:

**Abdullah Alkafri** is the Executive Director and Co-founder of Ettijahat–Independent Culture, which supports artists from Syria and the Southwest Asia and North Africa (SWANA) region. He is a playwright, cultural manager and cultural activist. His work spans cultural policy, strategic planning and arts education. As an author and researcher, he has published academic works on art, society and cultural change, including *On the Margin’s Margin: Some Fragmented Thoughts on the Circumstances of Those who Make Art*. His writing focuses on cultural displacement and artistic expression during crises, examining independent culture in the SWANA region. Based between Brussels and Beirut, he lectures at the Institute of Fine Arts and Audiovisual Studies, Beirut, teaching cultural production sociology, playwriting and theatre direction.



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Abdullah holds a PhD in theatre studies from Saint Joseph University, Lebanon. Previously, he has served on the International Programme Advisory Committee for the 8<sup>th</sup> World Summit on Arts and Culture (2019, Malaysia).

Moderator:

**Jordi Baltà Portolés** works as a freelance consultant, researcher and trainer in cultural policy, cultural rights, sustainability, and international cultural relations. He is a member of the UNESCO Expert Facility for the implementation of the 2005 Convention on the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and an advisor on culture and sustainable cities at the Committee on Culture of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG). He has also worked regularly with On the Move, including on the *Perspective* reports (2022-2024) and the *Capacity Building Report* (2025) as well as in several reports on performing arts and disability within the Europe Beyond Access project. Jordi holds a PhD from the universities of Girona and Melbourne, and teaches regularly at several universities.



## Plenary discussion: Harvesting insights from rapporteurs and participants

29 April, 17:00-18:30

[MKC Youth Cultural Centre](#), Cinema Frosina [[Google Map](#)]

### Rapporteurs:

**Sviatlana Haidalionak** is a Manager of Artistic and Research Projects at the Warsaw Observatory of Culture, where she coordinates artistic and research residency programmes for cultural practitioners in Warsaw, with a strong focus on artists and researchers with migration experience. Her work engages closely with issues of cultural mobility, legal precarity, and the impact of migration policies on artistic autonomy and transnational collaboration.

With over fifteen years of experience in independent cultural and community-based projects in Belarus and internationally, she has led numerous initiatives supporting socially engaged art, inclusion, and cross-border cooperation. Her background in theatre and cultural management informs her practice of observing, facilitating, and reflecting on complex artistic processes shaped by political and social constraints. She contributes to discussions on cultural mobility justice by connecting institutional practice with lived experience and knowledge from the field.

**Lorena Copil** is a project coordinator and communications specialist with experience in the independent cultural sector, working at the intersection of cultural practice, care and sustainability. She has been involved in initiatives that question current dynamics within the cultural field and explore alternative approaches to cultural work. She coordinated Re:form (March 2024 – November 2025), an experimental programme developing frameworks of support and care for Romanian artists and cultural professionals, developed by Cluj Cultural Centre.

Her practice includes facilitating collaborative formats focused on collective speculative thinking and community building, as well as communications work on culture's role in well-being, sustainable development, the future of cultural work, and heritage preservation.

**Ika Sienkiewicz-Nowacka** is a curator and cultural manager, and Head of the Artistic Residencies Department at the Ujazdowski Castle Centre for Contemporary Art in Warsaw. In 2003, she founded the U-jazdowski Residencies (as A-I-R Laboratory), the first ongoing residency programme in Poland and one of the leading residency platforms in Central Europe.

She has contributed to the research and implementation of new residency models, particularly in Eastern Europe, as part of the European Commission-funded project RE-tooling RESIDENCIES (2010–2012). She works in politically sensitive contexts, co-organising residencies and exchanges between Palestinian, Polish, and international practitioners in Poland and Palestine within the long-term project Everyday Forms of Resistance (2016–2023). In response to Russia’s military aggression against Ukraine, she co-curated Emergency Residencies (2022), supporting displaced artists and cultural workers seeking refuge, which later informed and evolved into the current Solidarity Residencies programme.

Her work also addresses working conditions in the arts and culture sector, with particular attention to the precarity of cultural labour. This approach informed her involvement in Care, Community, Laboratory: Mapping Residencies (2018–2023), an international research project examining residencies as spaces of care and institutional responsibility. She is a co-author of publications dedicated to the residency sector: *Re-tooling Residencies* (2009), and *On Care. A Journey into the Relational Nature of Artists’ Residencies* (2023).

**Antonija Letinić** works as Senior Advisor for Development and Strategic Partnerships within the Department for Research and Development of Kultura Nova Foundation. Since 2000 she has collaborated with numerous organisations engaged in the field of culture, arts and media in Croatia. She worked as coordinator and programmer for the organisation Kurziv – Platform for Matters of Culture, Media and Society, as Editor-in-chief of the online publication Kulturpunkt.hr, and as a coordinator of the local network of independent cultural organisations Operation: City as well as the regional platform for culture Kooperativa. At Kultura Nova, she works on development and capacity building programmes, international cooperation projects such as ADESTE+ and IN SITU, and on networking, cooperation and strategic partnerships. She has conceptualised, edited and contributed to numerous publications and specialised magazines, as well as participating in different research initiatives (across media, youth and cultural policies).

**Florent Mehmeti** is a senior theatre and film director and Professor of Theatre Production at the University of Prishtina. A long-standing cultural entrepreneur, manager, and cultural policy contributor, he is a PhD candidate specialising in cultural entrepreneurship and management within cultural policy. From 2000 to 2002, he served as Manager for PR and Development at the National Theatre of Prishtina. Since 2003, he has been a co-founder and Director of ODA Theatre, and since 2015, the Founder and Artistic Director of HAPU, an international festival dedicated to artistic creation in public spaces. He initiated and served

two mandates as President of the Cultural Forum, a network of 55 independent cultural organisations in Kosovo, and has been a member of the Board of Advisors of IETM, Europe's largest contemporary performing arts network. His artistic portfolio spans over 60 theatre, film, television, and public-space projects, alongside three decades of cultural policy and project leadership.

**Argyro Toumazou** is a cultural producer based in Nicosia. She has collaborated with artist groups, communities and NGOs in Cyprus for over two decades, with extensive experience in bi-communal programmes and art initiatives between the two Cypriot communities while working closely with local authorities, UNDP, and Cyprus' Ministry of Culture. Since 2000, she has been a co-founding cultural director of D6:EU in Cyprus, coordinating EU Creative Europe multi-annual programmes.

She is currently working on *Contested Desires: Constructive Dialogues* (CDCD, 2023-27), considering the problematic legacy of European colonialism, and *Mediterranean as the Climate Hotspot* (MATCH, 2025-2027), engaging artists and communities in climate action across the Mediterranean. In 2026, working with On the Move and other OTM members, the D6 team is leading on a new programme, *ASSEMBLE* (2026-2028), as a critical response to the climate emergency and ecological decline at the intersection of conflict and displacement.

Moderator:

**Yohann Floch** is the Director of Operations at On the Move, the international network dedicated to the circulation of artists and culture professionals. He is also Director of FACE, a resource platform supporting European capacity-building programmes in the contemporary performing arts. Over the course of his career, Yohann has designed, coordinated and contributed to numerous European cooperation projects and pilot international collaborations, working with independent arts organisations and cultural institutions. He regularly acts as an external expert for governmental bodies and private foundations, and leads or co-authors European policy reports. He currently serves as a member of the international advisory board of the Danish organisation IMMART – International Migration Meets the Arts.

Previously, he has held several senior leadership roles, including Secretary General of the European Dancehouse Network, Director of Skåne's International Resource Office, Coordinator of Dansehallerne's Nordic dance network, and Coordinator of the Circostrada network.

## Cultural visits and curated discussions

These parallel visits invite participants to move through Skopje's artistic landscape and discover how the local arts scene takes shape, resists, and evolves. From fragile and contested cultural spaces to self-organised structures of solidarity, and into the streets, buildings, and shared spaces of the city, each visit offers a different entry point into the conditions of artistic practice in Skopje and North Macedonia today. Together, they trace how bodies, spaces, and collective practices engage with social transformation through lived experiences, situated practices, and ongoing negotiation.

### Route #1: Performing Public Space: Artistic Practices in the City

09:30-13:00 with [Faculty of things that can't be learned](#)  
and [AKTO festival for contemporary arts](#)

**Meeting point:** 9h30, in front of The Dude Specialty Coffee, ul. Apostol Guslarot 16, Skopje  
[\[Google Map\]](#)

This visit explores practices that approach the city as a site of artistic exploration and collective engagement with shared community concerns. Taking place in the former Railway building, the visit begins with the discovery of the building's original community-oriented vision and its current revitalisation. Participants are then introduced to the long-term practice *City as a Stage*, which uses diverse research methods, scenographic tools, and the involvement of communities and experts from different fields to approach the urban environment as a performative space. A final discussion with Macedonian interdisciplinary arts practitioners reflects on how performance engages with the city as a living and evolving context, and how public space becomes a stage where collective concerns and urban questions are made visible.

**Part I – Presentation of the Railway building and the City as a Stage project, by Filip Jovanovski, interdisciplinary artist**

**Part II – Discussion with panellists:**

**Ana Frangovska** (curator, National Gallery North Macedonia)

**Dimitar Milev** (architect, Faculty for Things That Can't Be Learned - FRU)

**Martina Danilovska** (independent actress)

**Andrea Markoska** (producer, independent theatre company Schtrich)



moderated by **Milica Ilić** (independent creative consultant)

After the conversation, we warmly invite you to stay for informal chats in the yard and enjoy some soup together.

*More information on the speakers:*

**Martina Danilovska**, actress with a bachelor's degree from the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Skopje. During her studies, she participated in several professional projects, including performances in public space as a member of the Scene Laboratory for Spatial and Performative Research within FRU/AKTO, as well as activist performances, musicals, and a feature film. Alongside her artistic practice, she has been actively involved in facilitating and leading teams in numerous Erasmus+ projects, including youth exchanges and training courses on a range of topics.

**Ana Frangovska**, PhD is an art historian, curator, and Museum Advisor at the National Gallery of the Republic of North Macedonia, and Lecturer at the Institute of Art History and Archaeology, Faculty of Philosophy, University "St. Cyril and Methodius". She completed her PhD in Contemporary Arts and Media in Belgrade (2023). Frangovska has curated the Macedonian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2013, 2022, and 2024, collaborating with leading contemporary artists. She has realised over 300 exhibitions and is founder of the Galichnik Art Residency. She currently serves as President of AICA Macedonia.

<https://nationalgallery.mk/>

**Andrea Markoska** is a producer and cultural project manager. She holds a degree in Production from the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Skopje. Her work spans theatre, film, and festival production, with a focus on regional collaboration and interdisciplinary practices. Since 2023, she has been part of the independent theatre organisation Schtrich, working as a theatre producer and project manager. Within the organisation she founded and produced Under 600, a platform and festival supporting independent theatre in the Western Balkans. She is also part of the production team of the National Theatre Festival "Vojdan Chernodrinski". She is an alumna of several international programs and academies Creative Producers (British Council & Curated Place), Creative Leaders Academy, Festivals Academy (British Council & Edinburgh Napier University), with a professional focus on creative production, project management, and the development of sustainable cultural practices.

<https://www.facebook.com/schtrichproduction/>

**Dimitar Milev** is an interdisciplinary architect and urban planner based in Skopje. His work explores spatial–social relationships in urban contexts, employing diverse media as tools for research and practice. He is an active member of the Scene Laboratory for Spatial and Performative Research within FRU/AKTO, contributing to education, research, design, and creative production. Since 2021, he has collaborated on site-specific performances that merge architecture and theatre through analytical and performative methods addressing urban and community challenges. He has participated in several international exhibitions, including the Venice Biennale of Architecture, Prague Quadriennale, and the Biennale of Stage Design in Novi Sad, and has contributed, as part of collaborative teams, to multiple award-winning local and international architecture competitions.

<https://akto-fru.org/en/>

**Milica Ilić** is a creative consultant and cultural worker working at the intersection of contemporary and socially engaged arts, cultural policy and transnational cooperation. Her work combines research, project development and the curation of discursive formats and public programmes. She investigates how artistic ecosystems evolve across borders, and how artists and cultural organisations develop alternative ways of producing and collaborating. Through publications, curated conversations and pedagogical initiatives, she contributes to collective reflection within the field. She previously coordinated the research project RESHAPE and worked with Onda and IETM on questions of artistic mobility, international circulation and network-building.

## Route #2: Holding the Line: Practices, Structures and Solidarity in the Visual Arts

09:30-12:30 with [Centar Jadro](#)

**Meeting point:** 9h30, in front of SC Dunja, Rajko Zhinzifov 22, Skopje [[Google Map](#)]

This visit highlights experiences of solidarity, mutual support, and self-organisation within Skopje's visual arts scene. Beginning with a visit to SC Dunja and continuing to SC Jadro, participants explore how informal networks, self-organised initiatives, and innovative structures sustain artistic practice and professional life in response to local challenges. Meetings with artists of different generations and practices offer a broader picture of a scene that survives, adapts, and reorganises itself through collective action.

### Part I – Visits

Visit to **SC Dunja**, a self-organised social and cultural space in Skopje supporting grassroots initiatives, artistic practices, and community exchange and **SCS Jadro**, a public cultural and social space in Skopje, developed through a civic-public partnership, that supports independent contemporary art and fosters collaborative, inclusive cultural practices.

The visit will also include an exhibition at SCS Jadro presenting works by **Partizan Print** and **Sali Ertunc**, offering a direct insight into their practices and the ways they are shaped by and respond to the local context.

### Part II – Discussion with panellists:

**Biljana Dimitrova**, PartizanPrint

**Sali Ertunc**, Kula collective

**Marija Hristova**, Private print

moderated by **Gjorgje Jovanovik**, SCS Jadro

*More information on the speakers:*

**Marija Hristova** is an author, cultural practitioner, and co-founder of PrivatePrint, an interdisciplinary curatorial studio originally founded in Skopje in 2015. With background in philology and cultural studies, she takes a comparative and interdisciplinary approach to her work in publishing and curatorial projects, and as an author. PrivatePrint is a studio dedicated to building a networked cultural practice through collaborations, events,

residencies, and publications. With interdisciplinarity and publishing as its primary working methods, the studio focuses on opening space for socially emerging critical topics, non-institutional and alternative curatorial and artistic practices, critical design, and related fields. Founded by Ilija Prokopiev and Marija Hristova, PrivatePrint now operates with bases in Skopje and Ljubljana.

<https://privateprint.mk/en>

**Partizan Print** is a self-sustainable, Skopje-based screen-printing collective and independent publishing initiative. Operating within close connection with Kolektiv Veternica, it runs a self-organised studio focused on sustainable cultural production in visual and performative arts dedicated to developing and establishing inclusive cultural practices.

Its work spans workshops, live printing, artist books, fanzines, posters, as well as performances, installations, and socially engaged actions. Over the past three years, it has collaborated with more than 50 artists from the Balkans, Europe, and Asia, and regularly participates in international graphic art festivals and exhibitions (Skopje, Rome, Valencia, Göteborg, Marseille, Bari, Belgrade, Berlin).

Partizan Print embraces inclusive cultural practices, aiming to strengthen continuity in cultural decentralization and participation. It is collaborating with various initiatives, and it is partner with Bosh Festival in organizing Fijuk fair of independent arts, regional initiative dedicated to promotion of alternative arts. At its core is an experimental, process-driven approach to screen printing that embraces unpredictability, collective creation, and critical engagement with contemporary artistic practices.

[www.partizanprint.mk](http://www.partizanprint.mk)

**Sali Ertunc** is a visual artist working across drawing, printmaking, painting, and mural practices. He graduated from the Faculty of Fine Arts in Skopje, specialising in graphic art and printmaking. His work is rooted in an experimental, process-driven approach, combining influences from expressionism, DIY culture, and punk aesthetics. Moving across media, he explores social and political themes, environmental concerns, and everyday life through a vivid, direct visual language. Ertunc's practice is closely connected to collective and self-organised contexts, particularly **Kula**, an independent cultural platform in Skopje that brings together artists and initiatives around shared production, knowledge exchange, and alternative modes of cultural organisation. His work has been presented in numerous solo and group exhibitions in North Macedonia and internationally.

**Gjorgje Jovanovik** works in the SCS Centar-Jadro, a public cultural institution that strives to nurture a progressive culture through the creation of programmes and the affirmation, education, and development of art and socio-cultural practices in collaboration with individuals and formal and informal groups. As an artist, he has realised multiple projects that focus on the issues of integration and disintegration of contemporary man. He has realised numerous solo and group exhibitions in North Macedonia and abroad including: “Stories from the Margins” (Skopje, 2025), “Mirror” (New York, 2024); “Bitter Sugar” (Skopje, 2023), “Decapitated” (Berlin, 2020), “Chocolate Drops” (Vienna, 2018); “Invention for You Wonderful People!” (Skopje, 2014); “The Confession of a Cake Monster” (Rovinj, 2013); “Fragmented Archive of the Artist from the Country in Transition” (New York, 2010); “It’s Complicated” (Graz, 2010).

<http://www.gjorgjejovanovik.com>

<https://www.centariadro.mk>



### Route #3: Anatomy of a Performing Arts Scene: Bodies, Spaces and Autonomy

09:30-12:30 with [Lokomotiva - Centre for New Initiative in Arts and Culture](#)

**Meeting point:** 9h30, in front of Kino Kultura (former arts space), Luj Paster 3, Skopje  
[[Google Map](#)]

This visit explores the anatomy of Skopje’s independent performing arts scene through its spaces, bodies (of work, labour, and organization), and modes of organisation. Starting from the former Kino Kultura site, it opens a discussion on the loss and precarity of independent cultural infrastructure, and on what it means for a scene to exist and sustain itself without stable spaces for research, creation and presentation. The visit continues with a guided walk focusing on performing arts spaces, leading to Dom na kultura Kočo Racin and a meeting with local practitioners. Through conversation and exchange, it explores the relationship between physical space and artistic freedom, the “body” of the scene and its responses to social and geopolitical pressures, and possible futures for independent performing arts in Skopje.

#### **Part I – *Imagine: Walking through Space, Absence, and Future of Performing Arts in Skopje with Ivana Dragšić***

09:30-10:30

*Imagine...* is a non-linear, discursive walk through the contradictory realities shaping the Macedonian independent performing arts scene. It traces the conditions that have led to a persistent lack of space: political, economic, and cultural, while materializing in sites marked by neglect, transformation or uricide.

Beginning from a place defined by its absence, the walk navigates through spatial contradictions that speak of systemic decay and annihilation of public interest, market-driven values, and dominant cultural narratives. These environments reflect not only the lack/loss of physical spaces, but the critical aspect of their fundamental role: to foster social relations and critical thought.

At its core, the walk proposes that the struggle for performing arts is inseparable from the struggle for public space as a social and political resource. It unfolds as an immersive experience through cruel reality, power/lessness, and imagination. It culminates in front of a building from 1954, collectively built by unionised workers for their own cultural needs,

later passing through layers of use and neglect. Standing there, participants are invited to imagine not only what is missing, but what could exist?

## Part II – Discussion with panellists:

10:30-12:30 at Koch Racin House of Culture, Dimitrie Cuposki 20A, Skopje [[Google Map](#)]

**Ivica Dimitrijevic** (MI Film & Theatre production)

**Kristina Lelovac** (Tiiit! Inc./Festival of Feminist Culture FIRSTBORN GIRL)

**Marija Hana Trajkoska** (Kultura Beta)

moderated by **Biljana Tanurovska-Kjulavkovski** (Lokomotiva)

*More information on the speakers:*

**Kristina Lelovac** is an actress, performer and performing arts curator. She teaches Drama Acting and Contemporary Performance Practices at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts in Skopje, basing her pedagogical work on critical pedagogies and feminist principles of care, equality, solidarity and exchange. She performs and collaborates on devising performances within interdisciplinary artistic projects, exclusively at the independent scene. She is one of the co-founders of the Festival of Feminist Culture and Action ПРВО ПА ЖЕНСКО (FIRSTBORN GIRL) and curates its performing arts program. During the pandemic, she initiated the Performing arts platform REHEARSING FEMINIST FUTURES which, promoting alternative modes of education and production, grew into a unique comprehensive program of support, specifically intended for precarious (women) artists active on the local independent cultural scene.

<https://tiiiitinc.com/en>

**Ivica Dimitrijevic** is an actor, director, and cultural worker based in Skopje. He graduated in Acting from the Faculty of Dramatic Arts at the Ss. Cyril and Methodius University under the mentorship of Professor Vlado Cvetanovski. Since 2012, he has been a member of the Macedonian National Theatre, following earlier work at Theatre Kumanovo. He has performed in around 40 theatre productions and appeared in numerous feature and short films. Ivica is a long-time collaborator with the independent company Franz von Strolchen and co-founder of MI Film & Theatre production. Beyond acting, he is active as a musician, performance artist, cultural organizer, and advocate for progressive cultural policies in North Macedonia.

**Marija Hana Trajkoska** holds a degree in psychology and is a co-founder of the association for the promotion of youth culture “Kultura Beta”. Since her high school years, she has been



# ON THE MOVE

actively involved in organising cultural events and festivals, and in her free time she writes poetry and creates music.

<https://www.kulturabeta.com/>

**Biljana Tanurovska-Kjulavkovski**, is a cultural worker, researcher and curator at the intersection of dance, theatre and visual arts performance, art history, cultural policy, independent cultural scene, feminist and environmental (curatorial) practices; Currently, she is a co-researcher for the NADA Digital Archive and Dance Map project; curator of Performance Platform festival in Skopje and school Curating in Context. She is part of Lokomotiva and works as a freelancer.

<https://www.lokomotiva.org.mk/>

*Lokomotiva - Centre for Initiative for Arts and Culture is supported by the Culture for Development project of the Government of Switzerland and is implemented by Heartefact Fund. The content/opinions can in no way be considered to reflect the views of the donors.*

<https://heartefact.org/en/>



## Route #4: Session on the Music Scene

09:30-12:30 with [Creative Europe Desk - North Macedonia](#),  
[Password Production](#) and [Laboratorium](#)

**Meeting point:** 9h30, Laboratorium, [[Google Map](#)]

The Music Landscape Session explores how Balkan music professionals can tour, showcase, connect, and build sustainable international careers without burning out or going broke. It highlights concrete mobility and collaboration opportunities within the Creative Europe framework, while addressing the structural gaps the sector still faces – from support for emerging artists and professional management to touring budgets, export strategies, and cross-border partnerships. As Skopje moves toward European Capital of Culture 2028, the session asks whether music will be recognised as a serious economic and cultural sector with a long-term development vision. The discussion advocates for strategic public investment focused on capacity building and sustainable growth rather than short-term spectacle. By connecting policy, funding and practice, the session aims to strengthen the international positioning of Balkan music across European stages and markets.

### Panel discussion: Breaking Through? Music Mobility and Structural Barriers in the Balkans

9:30-10:45, with panellists:

**Malgorzata Szlendak**, Policy Officer, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture (DG EAC): *Culture Moves Europe* results related to the music sector and the Balkans

**Ruth Jakobi**, Secretary General, European Music Council (EMC) and **Gwendolen Sharp**, Founding Director, The Green Room: The GreenBeat Nexus initiative accelerating the green transition in Europe's music sector

**Ruth Koleva**, SoAlive Music Conference, Sofia Live Festival: Where Does the Balkan Music Industry Stand in Europe?

**Laze Tripkov**, Skopje ECoC 2028: Music in Skopje ECoC 2028: Representation or Transformation?

co-moderated by **Biljana Prentoska**, Creative Europe Desk North Macedonia & **Anera Stopfer**, Creative Europe Desk Croatia

10:45 – 11:00 *Coffee break*



**Interactive Workshop: Break Borders - Mobility, Management and Market Access for Emerging Balkan Artists**

11:00 - 12:30, interactive workshop designed for artists aiming to expand beyond their local scene and access the European music market, moderated by **Vladimir Stojchevski**, Creative Europe Desk North Macedonia

With guest experts:

**Tamara Kaminska**, European Music Exporters Exchange

**Weyer Balázs**, Hangvető, Hungary

**Cosmin Ionescu**, Mastering the Music Business / Overground Music, Romania

**Mirena Staneva**, Bulgarian Music Association, Bulgaria

**Ognen Stojanoski**, Password Production, North Macedonia

**Nadica Banishka**, music manager and booking professional, North Macedonia

1. Self-Assessment: Are You Export-Ready? Participants will complete a quick self-assessment and discuss results in small groups.
2. Case Clinic – Live Feedback Session. Selected artists will present a short pitch and receive direct, constructive feedback from experts.
3. Build Your Mobility Plan. Hands-on session to create a personal international development plan.
4. Conclusion & Key Takeaways.

## About the Panel Discussions

Each panel discussion brings together two guest speakers, each invited to contribute their unique expertise, perspectives, and lived experiences – rooted in both their personal journeys and the projects they have led or collaborated on. The format is designed to foster meaningful exchange, offering participants the opportunity to engage with diverse viewpoints, practical insights, and critical reflections on the session’s theme.

A skilled facilitator, well-versed in the subject matter, will guide the conversation to ensure it remains balanced, dynamic and inclusive. They will carefully allocate time so that each speaker has the opportunity to fully present their ideas and experiences. In addition, they will actively encourage dialogue between the panellists, creating space for contrasting opinions, shared learnings, and unexpected connections to emerge. The facilitator will also open the floor to participants, fielding questions and comments to ensure the discussion remains interactive and focused on the key issues at hand.

## About the Long Tables

A Long Table<sup>1</sup> is both a physical space and a non-hierarchical process for communal dialogue on shared concerns. It fosters an abundant, free-flowing exchange of ideas, perspectives, information and energy.

A curated group of core participants sets the table – not as experts delivering presentations, but as conversation catalysts. They offer initial thoughts or provocations on the topic, modelling engagement by introducing themselves when they first speak. There are no formal speeches or Q&As; instead, they invite *you* – seated around the perimeter – to join in at any moment and renew the table’s energy.

The table is arranged with chairs for the core group, plus a few empty seats. If you wish to contribute, simply take a seat and wait for a natural pause to speak. Over time, the conversation should see a dynamic flow of participants moving to and from the table.

Need a seat when none are free? Gently tap someone’s shoulder to ask if they’ll yield their spot. If you leave the table – or even the room – you’re welcome to return whenever you like.

To ensure the discussion insights are preserved and shared, dedicated guest rapporteurs will take detailed notes throughout the sessions. Their role is to carefully synthesise the main themes, insights, and actionable ideas that arise from the conversation. These key takeaways will then be presented during the ‘Harvesting Insights’ session, ensuring that the collective knowledge and ideas generated here contribute meaningfully to the broader learning and outcomes of the Forum.

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

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<sup>1</sup> The Long Table format was conceived by Lois Weaver, an artist, activist, academic, and founding Board Member of Queer Up North. Lois is co-founder of the New York performance company Split Britches. Weaver’s inspiration for the Long Tables came from scenes in Marleen Gorris’ feminist film *Antonia’s Line* (1996) in which a tight-knit family welcomes more and more family and neighbourhood characters to their long dining table. In a similar way, Weaver’s format welcomes you to the table to share your experiences, thoughts, ideas, questions and visions.