



Charter for a sustainable and responsible cultural mobility for policy- and decision-makers at local, national and EU level

This Charter is intended as a **practical online tool** for policy- and decision-makers who participate in the definition and implementation of cultural, social, environmental, labour policies and any other decision having an impact on the cross-border mobility of artists and cultural operators.

The Charter is a tool for change: this document allows to check which criteria you already respect and which others you could respect or include in your activities, define a timeframe, and engage in improving your mobility-related practices. The *Charter* section on On the Move's website, regularly updated, provides additional details, useful resources and inspiring examples from the European and international scene – and informs about the peer-learning opportunities organised by On the Move for the organisations supporting the Charter and engaged in respecting its principles.

Not all the criteria might be applicable for you – indeed the objective is not to fulfil them all, but to assess your own situation and define how to improve (there's always room for improvement!). First and foremost, cultural mobility needs to be acknowledged as a practice encompassing artistic, cultural, economic, social and environmental aspects.

Artists and cultural operators are increasingly connected internationally and active across borders, but rules and laws are often ill adapted to the very specific conditions experienced by these “highly mobile” workers (imposed flexibility, short-term contracts, employers located in different countries, pension benefits accumulated in different countries...). Removing administrative and bureaucratic obstacles to mobility is key to allow the cultural and creative sectors to exploit their artistic, social, economic potential.

Mobility happens anyway: let's make it happen better!

For more details, resources, and the updated list of signatories, visit
<http://on-the-move.org/charter>

For any clarification, contact us: mobility@on-the-move.org

Visas and cultural mobility

1. Ease the mobility of artists and cultural professionals working across borders.

- Foster the coordination of administrative procedures of ministries and authorities dealing with immigration, work permit and visa permits, in respect of, and in collaboration with relevant ministries administering the EU and National Cultural and Development policies. Adopt a cross-administration or ministries approach and procedures (involving the Ministry of Culture, Home Affairs and Foreign Affairs), so that they can solve and prevent problems and adapt procedures to the reality of the cultural sector.
- Coordinate with consular representations, national authorities, national cultural centres abroad and make sure that when an artist is officially invited to visit your country (for any purpose, from training to residency, exchange, exhibition, touring etc.), the visa procedures are smooth and timely.
- Ensure that all embassies, consulates or other representations are well informed; services follow harmonised procedures, guidelines, standards, papers, documents etc.; make information about procedures transparent and available.
- Make sure the officers in charge of following the visa process of invited artists, groups or cultural professionals have the right contacts and knowledge about artists' specific conditions (e.g. multiple entries, diversity of employment status, frequent and/or last minute invitations etc.).
- Consider creating a "hot line" that cultural organisations can call in case the artists/cultural professionals they invite from third countries experience problems with visa procedures. Acknowledge that problems in getting visas ultimately damage also the inviting organisations, and cause a waste of public money.
- For the Schengen space, make sure the EU visa code is respected by the consular representations / external agencies. Ensure clear and transparent procedures, clarity of information, proper training of the staff, respect of human dignity, proper explanations in case of refusal of a visa and clear information about appeal procedures.
- In accordance with the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, ensure that preferential treatment is granted to artists and culture professionals from developing countries (or, at least, that they do not face special difficulties when applying a visa). Develop a monitoring procedure to generate statistics and data for the periodic UNESCO country-review process.

Administrative & social aspects of cultural mobility

1. Ensure sustainable working conditions for artists and cultural operators active across borders.

- Recognise the role of artists in society and the contribution of arts and culture as agents for positive social transformation. Respect the 1981 UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of the Artist drafted in consultation with the relevant representative organisations, and ensure a proper public funding of artistic and cultural sectors.
- Ensure that laws ruling working conditions fit the needs of highly mobile professionals in the artistic and cultural field (e.g. employment conditions, social security coverage across different countries, risk of double taxation, etc.).
- Make sure that the public institutions, administrations, civil servants dealing with mobile artists know and take into account the specificities of international working conditions and mobile cultural workers (related to employment status, contacts, social security, taxation, etc.).
- Ensure that information about administrative procedures and formalities is provided for free, and according - in terms of topics and coverage - to the Mobility Information Standards adopted by the experts working group convened by the European Commission in 2011. Support national and regional organisations providing relevant information for artists and cultural professionals working across borders, and ease their coordination with competent administrations (e.g. Ministries of culture working with Immigration / Foreign Affairs / Employment / social affairs ministries).

2. Include artists' mobility in a wider and longer-term perspective encompassing cultural, social and economic policies.

- Acknowledge the benefits and the positive impacts of international mobility and exchange on the professionals of the cultural and creative sector.
- Acknowledge as well the difficulties met by mobile artists (e.g. difficulty to balance international professional development and family life) and try and develop – together with the sector – social and economic policies to overcome such difficulties.
- Promote the coordination of different policy areas: cultural, social, employment, foreign affairs etc. at different governance levels (national, regional, local level) and with different stakeholders (institutions, civil society, for-profit and not-for profit sectors), with the overall aim to enhance the international exchanges and collaboration of artists and cultural professionals.
- Adopt a developmental approach that recognises mobility not simply as an ad hoc activity or as a one-off experience but as a longer-term investment in a process leading to specific outcomes (not outputs) over a period of time, e.g. in the course of a career. Support repeated visits which build familiarity with a specific context/community.
- Base this developmental approach on five pillars: intelligence - exploration - resources - fairness – sustainability.

3. Recognise the importance of artists' contribution to society, as well as the specific characteristics of the sector – notably in terms of imposed flexibility and shorter career durations for some professions.

- Take into due account the existing national and international studies pointing out the specific features and needs of mobile artists and cultural workers, obstacles and solutions. If necessary, commission new studies to highlight specific conditions and needs.

- Develop legal and institutional structures and frameworks which would take account of the unique working conditions of performing artists and ensure them core labour rights, access to social security, to lifelong learning and training (also aiming at career transition), to health insurance and to fair and flexible taxation and pension schemes, regardless of their contractual situations.

4. Ensure a cross-ministries approach for the adoption of simpler conditions for the mobility of artists and others working in the cultural sector.

- Form an inter-ministerial working group to improve the conditions of mobility for artists and other workers in the culture sector and address current problems and impediments to mobility that relate to national legislation. Make sure to acknowledge the social impacts of mobility, not just objectives of economic growth.
- The inter-ministerial group and specific professional sub-groups should liaise with the ministries in charge of culture, home affairs, labour and social affairs, finance, and where necessary with others, and map current problems and search for operative solutions.
- Introduce simplified implementation materials on regulations at the EU level, for instance, in connection with visa requirements or social security in the arts and culture.

5. Improve and make more effective the distribution of funding to cultural activities, taking into account international mobility.

- Make sure existing funding schemes do not hinder international activities, touring and mobility, but rather encompass them as a core part of artistic and cultural activities (of companies, groups, venues etc.).
- Include cultural operators and professionals (from technicians to cultural writers), not only artists, among the beneficiaries of public funding, grants and other forms of support.
- Consider "go and see" grants, grants for the participation of national professionals in international networks, grants supporting the market development etc. and ensure these grants cover travel – and when needed visa - costs.
- Ensure transparency and efficiency in the selection procedures for the provision of grants (i.e. with calls for applications issued several times a year, proved competence of the evaluators etc.), so that the system can respond flexibly to current needs of the sector.

6. Support the creation / development / coordination of information providers about cultural mobility.

- Acknowledge and support organisations optimizing the provision of relevant information for artists and cultural professionals working across borders (information about mobility opportunities, taxation, legal issues, etc.).
- Support the circulation of information about mobility projects through online platforms, real meetings etc. to foster the exchange of experiences and improve the quality of mobility projects. Give visibility to projects and initiatives funded not only nationally but also locally.

7. Reinforce cultural mobility objectives within cultural diplomacy / international cultural cooperation policies and programmes.

- Keep track and participate in events related to cultural diplomacy and encourage discussions and sharing of best practices related to cultural diplomacy (even at a local level).
- Support and balance the number of joint European and international activities by national cultural institutes and cultural SME's active at the European and international level.

- Encourage trans-regional bodies to introduce cultural mobility programmes, where they do not currently exist, and to foster cooperation between the various larger regions in Europe and beyond.

Environmental aspects of cultural mobility

1. Commit to environmental issues through crosscutting strategies.

- Refer to key international documents in the field (e.g. UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of Cultural Diversity Expressions, Agenda 21 for Culture etc.)
- Ensure environmental sustainability is a core issue on the agenda for strategy development, not only for the organisations you support but also for your own ministry, city council or governmental structure.
- Engage in developing strategies in the cultural and environmental sectors by setting up think tanks or cross-sector groups involving different ministries/public sectors (environment, technology, industry etc.) and representatives of the civil society.

2. Build the capacity of the cultural sector to deal with environmental issues.

- Partner with leading agencies or organisations involved in greening cultural policies and practices for training and capacity building programmes both for your organisation and for the cultural sector.
- Without affecting the budget for the artistic and cultural dimension of projects, support organisations providing resources and training to help artists and cultural professionals embed environmental decision-making in all areas of their activity.
- Develop and apply environmental criteria on top of artistic ones to evaluate the initiatives and the projects you support.
- Publicise models of good practice, including outstanding creative achievement using green technology at a local, national, European and international level.