

culturecounts

The campaign to highlight the value of culture in Scotland

Culture Counts is the collective voice of Scotland's Cultural Sector and related Creative Industries. We survey the data highlighting our value to the Scottish society and economy and we campaign on the issues impacting the sector at local, national and UK level.

We submit the following evidence from the cultural sector on differentiating the UK's immigration system in Scotland, and would be pleased to provide further information and/or a panel of expert representatives to support the work of the Scottish Parliament on this vital issue.

The British Council [“As Others See Us”](#) report shows that Britain was ranked 2nd overall for “attractiveness” among the top 15 global economies. The top characteristics for making Britain attractive were, Cultural and historic attractions, Cities and Arts. This demonstrates the importance of culture in representing the UK on the international stage and in driving tourism.

International relations

Scotland's culture is essential in putting the nation on the map for visitors and investors from across the EU and beyond. Our cultural landscape, including our many festivals, encourages performers, producers and tourists to visit Scotland and the work and talent we export help to shape a positive image of Scotland internationally.

Options for Differentiating the UK's Immigration System

Option 3. Increasing Scotland's influence in UK decision making

a. Scottish representation on the Migrant Advisory Committee

We support Scottish representation on the Migrant Advisory Committee. Scotland's immigration needs are divergent to UK needs; and it is therefore of vital importance that Scotland has a democratic stake in the final decisions of the Migrant Advisory Committee¹.

¹http://www.parliament.scot/S5_European/General%20Documents/CTEER_Dr_Hepburn_report_2017.04.24.pdf

Option 4. Scottish Sectoral Agreements

a. Creating a new postgraduate work visa for Scotland

We support the creation of new postgraduate work visa for Scotland. The cultural sector and related creative industries currently benefit from highly skilled postgraduates². Scotland needs to attract international and EU students; allowing students to stay and work after graduation makes studying in Scotland a more attractive prospect, this can include volunteers gaining practical experience in culture and heritage, and contributing their own national perspectives. Further to this Scotland benefits from strengthening the pool creative talent working here.

Differentiating immigration policy in Scotland would greatly support the sector to continue to secure a high standard of skilled professionals within the workforce, on which the creative industries depend². The sector currently employs many highly skilled professionals who are non-UK Europeans who bring their skills including languages as well as new ideas to the sector³.

Creating ‘European Talent – Working in Scotland Schemes’

We support creating ‘European Talent – Working in Scotland Schemes’, a sector-specific scheme for Scotland targeted at the cultural and creative industries - given their high degree of internationalism and domination by SMEs would be a major benefit to the sector⁴.

The sector currently benefits both from visa-free exchange and touring throughout the EU and from EU nationals making Scotland their creative base. This allows both talent and audiences to travel within the EU without administrative burden and allows Scottish organisations to grow their international work and profile.

The Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society, Edinburgh International Festival, Edinburgh Jazz and Blues Festival and Royal Military tattoo have permit-free status for visiting performers which avoids those festivals having to issue a certificate of sponsorship for each individual to obtain a work-permit; the wider use of this model should be explored.

Option 5. Devolving Administrative Aspects of Immigration

a. Creation of a Scottish Work Permit processing office

We support the creation of a Scottish Work Permit processing office(s). An office in Scotland would quicken processing times and ease the administrative and financial burden for organisations and individuals working in the cultural sector and related creative industries.

² <http://www.universities-scotland.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/HoC-Debate-on-Creative-Industries-7-Jul-16.pdf>

³ http://www.heraldscotland.com/politics/beyondbrexit/14913055.Beyond_Brexit_39_Brain_drain_39_of_EU_talent_feared_in_art_world_if_Hard_Brexit_forces_people_out_of_UK/

⁴ http://www.parliament.scot/S5_European/General%20Documents/CTEER_Dr_Hepburn_report_2017.04.24.pdf

Option 6. Scottish Visa Sponsorship Schemes

d. Create a single bilateral programme for Scotland only

We support the creation of a single bilateral programme for Scotland only. Scottish promoters produce festivals and events which attract performers and tourists from around the world. For example, Edinburgh Festivals collectively feature over 25,000 performers each year from over seventy countries.

These diverse events and festival programmes rely as performers do on the ability to work across borders with ease (both administratively and financially). If the quality of the events and attractions begin to suffer from promoters and festival organisers being unable to bring people in a straightforward way they could be unable to compete in attracting high visitor numbers as they currently do.

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