



BOUND TO MOBILITY

The building up of a performing arts community in the European Union

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BOUND TO MOBILITY

The building up of a performing arts community in the European Union (EU)

The EU promotes mobility as part of its mission to raise citizens' involvement in the integration process, in conjunction with single market growth and employment targets. Yet data shows that intra-EU mobility remains low. Administrative and legal barriers are assumed to hinder the freedom of movement of persons.

Within the arts field, performing artists, in particular, have been commonly associated to mobility throughout times since their activities are less regulated within national and organisational frameworks thus more flexible and adaptable to different places and partners. However, even apparently best suited, performing artists face many obstacles when working across borders in addition to their already vulnerable social condition.

This research proposes an exploration beyond legal-administrative obstacles to mobility for the case of performing artists in the EU. Within a qualitative postulate and grounded theory driven methodology it investigates mobility as the potential to work across different established categories be those of languages, countries, disciplines and cultures, consubstantiated in institutional and individual aspirations and competences.

Through analysis of a set of semi-structured interviews to artists and other professionals working in the performing arts in the EU it assesses empirically how aspirations and competences for mobility shape artistic practices and profiles as well as contributes to develop communities of interests at EU level. The emerging and fragile sector's organisation and action responds to the intricate demands imposed by intensified mobility aspirations that turned into a feature of performing arts market. Yet access to mobility relies on resources held by individuals and their organisations but also on societies as a whole to constitute adequate environments for these resources to flourish.

Keywords: Mobility - Performing Arts – European Union – Obstacles – Aspirations – Competences

AMARRADOS À MOBILIDADE

A formação de uma comunidade de artes do espetáculo na União Europeia (UE)

A UE promove a mobilidade como parte da sua missão de elevar a participação dos cidadãos no processo de integração, em conjunto com objetivos de crescimento do mercado único e da empregabilidade. Todavia, os dados mostram que a mobilidade intra-UE continua a ser baixa. Barreiras administrativas e jurídicas são assumidas como obstáculos à livre circulação de pessoas.

Dentro do campo das artes, os artistas de espetáculo têm sido ao longo dos tempos associados à mobilidade, pois as suas atividades são menos regulamentadas nacional e organizacionalmente, logo, mais flexíveis e adaptáveis a diferentes lugares e parceiros. No entanto, mesmo mais propícios à mobilidade, os artistas enfrentam vários obstáculos quando trabalham através das fronteiras para além da sua já vulnerável condição social.

Esta pesquisa propõe uma exploração para além dos obstáculos jurídico-administrativos à mobilidade tomando como caso os artistas de espetáculo na UE. Dentro de um postulado qualitativo e metodologia baseada na teoria fundamentada em dados investiga a mobilidade como o potencial para trabalhar entre diferentes categorias sejam línguas, países, disciplinas e culturas, consubstanciado em aspirações e competências institucionais e individuais.

Através da análise de entrevistas semi-estruturadas a artistas e outros profissionais do espetáculo na UE, avalia-se empiricamente como aspirações e competências para a mobilidade enformam práticas artísticas e perfis, bem como contribuem para desenvolver comunidades de interesses. A organização e ação do setor embora emergente e frágil responde às necessidades complexas impostas pela intensificação das aspirações à mobilidade que se transformaram numa exigência do mercado das artes. No entanto, o acesso à mobilidade depende não só dos recursos mantidos por indivíduos e organizações, mas também da sociedade como um todo se constituir como um ambiente adequado para estes recursos florescerem.

Palavras-chave: Mobilidade – Artes do Espetáculo – União Europeia – Obstáculos – Aspirações – Competências

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ABBREVIATIONS

AT – Austria

BE – Belgium

BG - Bulgaria

CEDEFOP - European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training

CY – Cyprus

CZ – Czech Republic

DE - Germany

DG - Directorate-General

DK - Denmark

EAC – (Directorate-General) Education and Culture

EE - Estonia

EC – European Commission

ECTS - European Credits Transfer and Accumulation System

EEA – European Economic Area

EP – European Parliament

EQF – European Qualifications Framework

ERA – European Research Area

ES - Spain

ERICARTS - European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research

EURES – European Job Mobility Portal

EUROFOUND - European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

EUROSTAT – Statistical Office European Communities

EU – European Union

FI – Finland

FR - France

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

GR - Greece

HKU – Hogeschool voor de Kunsten Utrecht / Utrecht School of the Arts

HU - Hungary

ICT – Information and Communication Technologies

IE - Ireland
IETM – International Network for the Contemporary Performing Arts
IOM – International Organisation for Migration
IT – Italy
LT - Lithuania
LU – Luxembourg
LV - Latvia
MEP – Member of the European Parliament
MT - Malta
NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation
NL - Netherlands
OECD – Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OMC – Open Method of Coordination
PL – Poland
PT – Portugal
RO - Romania
SE - Sweden
SEE – South East Europe
SI – Slovenia
SK - Slovakia
SME – Small and Medium Enterprises
TFEU – Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
UK – United Kingdom
UN – United Nations
UNESCO – United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organisation
USA – United States of America
VAT – Value Added Tax

FOREWORD: EXPLORING THE MOBILITY OF PERFORMING ARTISTS IN THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU)

Personal foreword

A research on mobility risks to be about everything and then nothing, if one does not manage to focus right. “Moobiiiiility? What do you mean by moobiiiiility?”, I was asked several times when attempting to present my subject. Beyond cosmopolitan dreams, the digital revolution, low-cost airlines, the EU project, and the belief that mobility is or should be a universal right it took me some time to settle. After all these years chasing mobility it became clear that what is at stake and moves me is to explore how can we live and work together across different established categories be those of languages, countries, disciplines and mind-sets. Then the performing arts and the EU seemed to me the perfect setting to stage this fundamental question.

Sociology has been my key to understand the world, and since the early years my main interests originated in organisations, work and employment, notably independent workers and their motivations, to touch social and cultural issues. It always puzzled me to understand the logics between agency and structure in the world of work. So artists have been since the beginning my object of predilection to try to understand their special condition in between an individuality and the community, freedom and constraint, vitality and vulnerability.

As for “mobility”, it came my way when I took up a traineeship in the European Commission, Directorate-General Education and Culture. I was proposed to assist the work of an expert in charge of two transversal issues namely “mobility” and “intercultural dialogue”. My task was to concentrate mostly on mobility. I felt relieved, as the second issue seemed even stranger to me back in 2002. Still moobiiiiility, what does it mean? Where to go? Well, once immersed in Brussels, got acquainted with the EU quarter and the “Europeans”, of course, mobility started to make all sense.

From an MA on choreographers’ social and professional profile in Portugal, the shift to a PhD on the mobility of performing artists in the EU seemed obvious. In my eyes I was

simply enlarging the market scope, from national to European. Trying to understand if the enlarged market would mean or could mean better conditions for artists.

Yet once I started to dig in I realised there was much more than that. Engaging in the study of mobility meant to take a road from economy to culture. In order to understand the causes, conditions and consequences of free movement of persons in the EU and what it takes to create a common space there was a need to look beyond the economic as it implies a cultural change. Moreover, mobility as a research object stands in between the national and European or transnational level challenging academic research paradigms and methodologies.

In this research process, I engaged myself in mobility processes that allowed me to deal with being in between countries, languages, disciplines, paradigms, and mind-sets. Without being a formal assumed research methodology or technique, I endured the same processes, felt the same opportunities and obstacles to mobility as the object of my study. I lived in 5 different cities and countries while trying to get this PhD done: Utrecht, Paris, Brussels, Freiburg and Porto. Feeling and experiencing helped me to understand, yet also made it all more complex.

I would like to particularly point out two categories that made this whole research process challenging: language and academic discipline. Firstly it was conducted in English as a third language. Myself, research supervisors and discussants and interviewees have used it as a lingua franca with all the freedom and constraints it implies. In my case I felt it more strongly when having to write. In this period I often found myself lost in translation and I realised that I could not play with words, that meanings and concepts echoed differently when reasoning in a third language.

Secondly, this research was also conducted in-between disciplines and paradigms. Though having sociology as the backbone, since it is my background, mobility took me to other disciplines such as management, economy, political science while touching many different fields as migrations, work and labour markets, professions, culture and arts.

So this research was conducted in the same way as the making of a puzzle. Being an exploration process grounded theory inspired, concepts came often from empirical research and then theory was adapted to face again the field and so forth. Moreover, alongside this long research process, Europe and the world have been evolving around. These are interesting times to take mobility as a conducting line to reflect on different opposing trends taking shape, between enthusiasm and fear, promotion and restraint, the global and the local, the individual and the community. The biggest challenge was first to find and then to keep a focus, as so many different concepts and categories crossed my way.

Finally, within this paradoxical frame, while moving on and discussing alongside performing artists, I/we realised that beyond accumulating stamps on the passport, mobility, in the same way as art and research, requires its own space, time and dynamics. So after all mobility implies a process of learning as well as change.

Acknowledgments

Throughout these years many contributed to make this research feasible and challenging. I am very grateful yet not able to name them all thus would like to acknowledge merely those that were more often around.

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Within the HKU, I would like to thank also the research centre Arts and Economy, represented by its director, Giep Hagoort and the Master of Arts Management in an

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In Porto, I would like to show my gratitude to FLUP – Faculty of Letters University of Porto and the Institute for Sociology (ISFLUP) for always being there with open arms and upon my return, most notably Cristina Parente, Carlos Gonçalves, João Miguel Teixeira Lopes and Natália Azevedo.

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Then I want to show my appreciation for the contribution of all interviewees, performing arts professionals, artists, producers, managers,... which privacy has been kept and that alongside my research path have been living, experiencing and believing on mobility opportunities despite obstacles.

From all those with whom I discussed mobility, I have to make a dear reference to Dragan Klaic who bridged me from academia to networks, a companion guide for concrete examples, contacts and arguments. Sadly, before this research has come to an end, Dragan has passed away far too precociously. I truly miss having Dragan around.

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INTRODUCTION: PERFORMING ARTISTS AS A CASE TO LOOK BEYOND LEGAL OBSTACLES TO MOBILITY

Problem statement, research questions and objectives

At a moment when “mobility” emerges as a recurrent paradigm on different spheres, from political and economical to social and cultural, artists are often regarded as being familiar to this model. Within the arts field, performing artists, in particular, have been commonly associated to mobility throughout times. Artistic freedom to create and perform across borders has been considered key to their career development both in terms of inspiration and revenue. Mobility is said to feed their search for new learnings and adequate working and living conditions to nurture creative processes and ensure sustainability. However a closer look at artists’ mobility reveals a surprisingly unknown territory full of dreams and expectations but also shadowed contradictions and vulnerabilities.

- What is at stake and why re-discovering the mobility of this professional group?
- May the artistic profession contribute to shed light on overall geographical and job mobility phenomena?

Performing artists’ activities are less regulated within national and organisational frameworks thus professionals are more flexible and adaptable to different work places and partners. In the last decades, however, in the performing arts as in other professional fields, mobility expectations and practices have been intensified reflected into a growing number of international festivals and tours, courses and workshops, guest studios and residencies, artistic collaborations and co-productions, arts and culture networks and platforms.

Technological developments in transports and communications alongside the growing globalisation of economic markets and emergence of international political bodies such as the European Union (EU), have all been diminishing distances and allowing for immediacy in the circulation of people, goods, ideas and information. In this scenario, many stakeholders, from economical and political to artistic have been praising mobility

opportunities. Artists are well acquainted with this potential yet they are also aware of its hurdles. The absence of professional regulation at national level that actually facilitates their flexibility at home and across borders designs a fragile social condition translated into a corresponding absence of a specific social status in many EU countries. So their renowned prowess for mobility comes at a price as they endure diverse obstacles when working across national borders in the EU.

- What are the obstacles to artists' mobility, notably in Europe where the EU project defines a particular supposing favourable mobility setting?

The minimal professional regulation at national level is transposed to the European space. This feature sets the scene for their social and professional vulnerability. Within a wider labour market, being on the move without any safety net puts at risk artists' position. In addition, their multiple and intricate work profile, combining varied work assignments and status, may collide in complex ways with existing national and EU institutions that regulate labour and circulation. Policy fields and administrative procedures in the areas of taxation, social security, visas and work permits and copyright are established nationally and often hinder those that circulate in between systems. Mobility across borders in the arts field reveals to be demanding, burdensome and risky, actually accessible to only a few.

Artists have been acquainted with this vulnerable condition at their own social expenses and stakes. Yet at a moment where political, economical and professional agendas are gradually enchanted by mobility potential turning it into a requirement of careers and markets, arts and artists free condition and expression may be endangered.

Therefore, the case of performing artists is elected by the present research as exemplary to analyse mobility impediments and explore its hidden logics. On one side performing artists personify at first sight the professional engaged in mobility being encouraged. Yet on the other hand, the features that sustain their mobility also impose a fragile social condition. In this respect this professional category may mirror the precariousness that lies behind the proclaimed mobility and flexibility prospects.

The EU territory and integration project provide as well a challenging background. Free movement of capitals, goods, services and persons is inscribed in its founding Treaty (of Rome, from 1957). Mobility is proclaimed as EU citizen's right-freedom and promoted as the basic pillar in which the common market is build upon.

However when looking at statistics, intra-EU mobility concerns a minor percentage of the population despite EU efforts to promote this single market where persons, goods and capitals are supposed to move freely. Throughout the years overall figures have kept constant and data shows that only around 4% of EU nationals live or work in another member-state than the one of origin (EUROFOUND, 2007). Several administrative and legal barriers have been officially assumed by the EU to hinder the freedom of movement of persons (European Commission, 2002b and 2010c).

Even if many artists might well be among the above-referred percentage (4%) that engages in mobility, the fact is that it seems to be a prerogative of a small part both of the artistic community and the overall EU population.

- Why is mobility accessible and/or appealing to only a few?
- What can play in as obstacles to mobility, beyond reported legal-administrative barriers?

Besides political, economical and professional arenas, mobility is also being intensively discussed within the social sciences. This debate may provide a more structural insight into this matter by inscribing and relating individual actions and social structures. While for some decades already some scholars have been announcing the raise of a new era in which mobility would emancipate individuals from conditionings imposed by territories, nation-states or families (Bauman, 2000; Beck and Grande, 2007); others suggest that movement (actual, potential or blocked) should be grounded in economic, social and political relations and contexts (Urry, 2000 and 2007; Allemand; Asher; Levy, 2004; Cresswell, 2006).

This latter theoretical stream analyses how mobility acts as a potential dependent on individual and institutional aspirations and competences (Canzler; Kaufmann; Kesselring, 2008; Parente, 2008). Access and engagement in mobility is thus

conditioned as it takes ability to aspire and to act to trigger this potential. So mobility can pilot new behaviours and/or reflect and reproduce previous social and spatial inequalities along with its own intrinsic ones. The aptitude to move cross-borders for career purposes relies on individual and professional profiles and attainments, as much as other institutional conditions. Then increased mobility expectations and practices are potentially changing the sector at individual and professional level, notably in what comes to working practices and profiles.

Embracing the inscription of mobility into institutional and individual contexts and features, the intention of this research is then to pursue the resulting main questions:

- What are the aspirations and competences for the mobility of performing artists?
- What consequences is mobility provoking into performing artists' working practices and profiles at individual and community/institutional level?

These questionings, from which the research originates are further developed and consolidated through the enunciation of the research objectives. The following goals express both: concerns of a broader reach regarding mobility as a transnational paradigm and the recognition of the exemplary social and professional condition of artists to test the EU integration project; to more specific type of intents that relate to the understanding of obstacles to mobility and the way its practice might be changing artistic practices and profiles.

General objectives:

- Contribute to shape a transnational driven research agenda, notably to build conceptual and methodological tools of analysis that may shed new lights into cross-border phenomena such as geographical and job mobility in the EU
- Progress with the study of the qualitative dimensions and the micro level of analysis of EU mobility, acknowledging its causes, conditions and consequences on a subjective and experiential level

- Contribute to unveil hidden logics and barriers to the development of the EU integration project, notably at the level of educational and cultural frameworks, by articulating institutional and individual levels
- Develop further the study of artistic professions and its specific social condition, taking into account the need to re-design an effective European framework of data collection and analysis
- Debate and contribute to the recognition of the specific social and professional condition and needs of artists as an example of independent qualified professionals on contemporary globalised markets
- Debate potential changes brought by mobility to the position of artists as professionals in relation to the sector as well as regarding the whole of the society, most especially the development of a common European cultural space

Operational objectives:

- Scrutinise obstacles to mobility in the performing arts field beyond legal-administrative and national frames
- Acknowledge aspirations and competences to mobility in the performing arts field, beyond artistic-technical
- Analyse processes and outcomes of mobility experiences so to understand potential changes in artistic practices and profiles at individual and community/institutional level

Presenting the dissertation

This dissertation is divided into the following main parts that group different chapters and correspond to traditional research phases:

- Introduction to problem statement, research questions and objectives;
- Part I - review of literature and discussion of concepts;
- Part II - analysis of empirical data collected;
- Part III - discussion of results;
- Conclusions and notes for further research.

The **Introduction** intends to briefly present the background scenario that serves as argument for the research questions and objectives: why and what is at stake when considering studying the mobility of performing artists in the EU. Though mobility comes out nowadays as recurrent paradigm in different societal spheres and performing artists are commonly associated to this model, remaining obstacles keep mobility overall figures low. It is important then to question obstacles to mobility and envisage looking beyond official legal-administrative conditionings taking the performing arts sector as a case.

Part I of this dissertation makes the review of literature intending precisely to discuss mobility as an emerging paradigm in different fields – the performing arts, the EU economic and political project and social sciences – and trying to grasp what lies behind performing artists’ paths around the EU. What do these emerging trends reveal to clarify the logics of the mobility of performing artists in the EU? What might be particular about the performing arts that can shed new lights over the mobility discussion? At the end, a methodological reflection is done presenting the research questions, concepts and choices in view of defies posed by mobility to research processes. The study of mobility reveals quite intricate. It is a transversal issue that crosses all the above knowledge fields interrelating individual and institutional levels across sectorial, national and EU frameworks. In this respect it questions concepts and methodologies of data collection and analysis and their acquired borders.

Chapter 1 describes the performing arts case in between freedom to create and perform across borders and the lack of professional regulation both at national and EU level. The vitality of this professional activity is contrasted by an enormous vulnerability on the social aspect. The large EU stage brings numerous opportunities but also many risks

and barriers. What are their specific barriers when working across borders in the EU? What has been put forward in order to facilitate it? Why it remains an unlocked potential?

Chapter 2 puts forward the background scenario in the EU. In view of the accomplishment of EU single market, mobility of citizens and workers is a political and economic target that remains far from being accomplished. Many obstacles to mobility remain still within this free area where this privilege is subject to some boundaries. Even if all formal barriers would go down, it seems most EU citizens would be reluctant to move and live abroad despite, in some cases, the lack of jobs and opportunities in their hometown. Why is it so? What makes mobility in the EU labour markets such a hard enterprise? As a matter of fact the internal promotion of mobility collides with increased restraint over external borders and towards third country nationals that show a paradoxical state of affairs. Nonetheless there are some emerging trends revealing new types of movement and new faces carriers of other purposes beyond traditional economic migration. Who are these pioneers of intra-EU mobility?

Chapter 3 inscribes mobility within social sciences theoretical strands and questionings. The issue of mobility is being intensively discussed within social sciences as an emerging model to analyse contemporary societies. How is the academic world handling and conceptualising mobility? Are social sciences providing valuable insights to clarify mobility processes in the EU? Is the deconstruction of this concept useful to shed light on mobility obstacles beyond administrative and legal frameworks? Various theoretical schools argue that mobility is pushing a new social order characterised by social fluidity and emancipation. Others disagree, affirming as an alternative that mobility is a prerogative of elite or those holding certain resources thus just inscribing into the pre-existent social structures and reproducing its logics. The in-depth analysis of the concept of mobility highlights the potential it encloses but also what plays in as determinants to its access and benefit. Both the institutional and the individual level will be analysed, as mobility results of the mutual interdependence of social structures and personal features. Beyond an analysis of mere movement, to unleash the potential within the concept of mobility, it is important to focus on aspirations and competences instead.

Chapter 4 discusses the methodological path of this exploratory study, clarifying choices and acknowledging its limitations. The qualitative postulate, social interactionism, grounded theory, semi-structured interviews and “snowball technique” sampling are the research paradigms and empirical tools chosen and articulated with the research questions, concepts and model of analysis. The lack of quantitative datasets to ground the research and the need to invest on micro-level analysis to reveal aspirations and meanings of decisions and actions taken led to the choice for a qualitative approach. Moreover the empirical strategy needed to envisage going beyond individual career paths or national and disciplinary case studies in order to grasp the supra-national dimensions of mobility. Artists as professionals are complex to define in its diverse and open-character but also in absence of a respective social status. What are the challenges of trying to get hold of artists’ mobility? The difficulty of defining the borders of the art field itself in addition to the intricate study of mobility makes this category hard to locate for research purposes. Moreover, nowadays mobility remains largely unknown and invisible since it poses new defies to migrations research concepts and methods based on national paradigms. How to identify then performing artists engaged in mobility beyond national frameworks? How to assemble a legitimate sample? How representative findings might be with regard to the EU stage? An array of professionals portraying different profiles and disciplines within the contemporary performing arts across the EU sampled via snowball technique and interviewed via a semi-structured script were gathered in order to trace the research questions.

Part II of this dissertation invites to embark on a journey over performing artists’ varied paths throughout the EU in search to understand their hopes and desires, projects, choices, conditions, experiences and outcomes. The target is to present and assess empirically how individual and institutional aspirations and competences for mobility may act as provisions or obstacles to performing artists’ projects and work processes across borders in the EU; and verify how this endeavour may be shaping their artistic practices and profiles at individual level as well as contribute to develop communities of interests and practices at professional/institutional level.

In the domain of aspirations, **Chapter 5** identifies a myriad of factors that come together to nurture dreams and causes for mobility. When within a certain location, working context or artistic project, conditions are not favourable or satisfactory enough for the creation, production and dissemination of art works in the way foreseen,

professionals may cross borders and look for material and human means somewhere else to assure the endurance of their art and of themselves. Aspirations go beyond mere artistic options to touch also political agendas, specific labour market conditions, and geographical features; all mutually dependent and interrelated. While some concern institutional and material settings, others refer to specific individual horizons and plans. More than a simple scenario, the asymmetric development of the sector's labour markets and political frameworks in the different EU countries configures different drivers and directions for mobility. Additionally, current artistic practices are reliant on an intensified need to meet and collaborate across borders.

Along the way, artistic creativity and other technical competences seem to be insufficient. Holding associated competences of strategic and relational sort reveals to be needed to work across borders, as we will observe along **Chapter 6**, as the in the EU scene opportunities double and become multifaceted, but also do risks. Performing artists in their daily work get confronted with tasks, contexts, expectations, behaviours and partners that put into cause their practices, the continuity and consistence of their projects as well as their motivations and career future interests. Communication, especially regarding foreign languages; digital information management and networking; initiative and risk taking; and social and civic abilities are requirements that put performing artists practices and profiles at test. This chapter will discuss in detail how obstacles at the competence level are experienced showing the ways technical, strategic and relational skills are interdependent in practice. In absence of this coupled know-how, artists learn the hard way, with their own mistakes how to handle mobility. However few hold adequate resources to keep on going. In this respect, mobility is also setting the scene for the gradual development of communities of interests at the EU level, that act up as mediators and platforms to share resources in order to face up the increased demands.

In **Part III** the main results coming out of the interviews analysis will be discussed in what concerns the challenges brought to artists' practices and profiles by mobility aspirations and competences.

Chapter 7 concentrates on the paradoxical and interdependent aspirations to mobility in between individual and institutional conditions. Result of unbalanced geographies,

politics and markets, some artists may take mobility as a fantastic chance, others seem not to have any other option and still further there are professionals who do not even dare to aspire. So obstacles may take place firstly at the level of aspirations as the possession of certain resources are needed in order to develop dreams and conceive projects. This chapter describes how aspirations to mobility are being pushed and developed in such a way that there is hardly a way out of the mobility spiral.

Chapter 8 describes how the complex articulation of competences at the technical, strategic and relational level configures challenges to artists' practices and profiles. Mobility is nurturing new forms of creation, production and dissemination of art processes and works as a response to increased competences demands: incitement to a very dynamic attitude and strategic planning; participation in hybrid collaborative projects; importance of processes over final products; and consequent development of communities of interest and practices. In this process of learn by doing that operates a passage from individuality to community, again, access is determined by the possession of the adequate resources.

The **Conclusions** draw a more general picture over the causes, conditions and consequences for the performing arts sector of mobility in the EU. It articulates together how mobility aspirations and consequent competences requirements have been reconfiguring the field towards the building up of a broader community of interests and practices in a common space that is the EU. The development of the sector collective organisation comes as a response to the constraints and intricate demands imposed by the intensified mobility aspirations that turned into a feature of performing arts market. The construction of this common space might mean a larger working stage for professionals yet reinforcement of status and competences of performing artists and their organisations are needed to allow its democratic access and free development. The capacity to access mobility relies on the resources held by individuals but also on societies to create the adequate environments for these resources to flourish. However, in this path towards enlarging mobility access many opposing societal trends remain as mobility puts into cause many paradigms and established institutions. Change at this level is reliant on a more consensual attitude and consequent investment towards mobility from societies and individuals.

Lastly, the dissertation comes to an end with a brief reflection as notes for further research. Being an exploratory study of a transversal and multidimensional object this research has come across, integrated and raised many new questions and discussions that open doors towards further investigation.



PART I

MOBILITY AS POTENTIAL:

THE CASE OF PERFORMING ARTISTS IN THE EU

1. PERFORMING ARTS WITHOUT SAFETY NET

Open, diverse and prototypal character

When looking into contemporary performing arts practices and professional profiles one discovers a quite flexible and wide-ranging field both as an artistic discipline and as a professional activity.

The meanings and practices of the performing arts have been amplified in the last decades, particularly from the last quarter of the 20th century¹. Nowadays the sector covers a crowd of disciplines, genres and sub-genres that may mix between each other, spanning dance, music, theatre, circus, and opera. These art forms are no longer restricted to a set of techniques and/or tools that used to define their limits. Performing artists have been working with and through disciplines implicating other arts in their work – whether the visual arts, architecture, and literature to mention few examples – engaging in transdisciplinary practices and hybridisation processes.

In addition, the use of information communication technologies (ICT) is raising questions to performing arts live and ephemeral character that relies on the body as main mean of expression by introducing new forms of support and manifestation. Performing artists are exploring digital technologies to create, produce and disseminate their works. The so-called virtual mobility tools open up news ways of expression but also of communication with peers and audiences (Staines, 2010). Actually it contributes to blur the traditional frontiers between creator, producer, distributor and the public and is taking performing arts into new unforeseen grounds.

Moreover, hierarchies are being questioned inside contemporary artistic processes where the creator is no longer the only one to claim for artistic status. Other profiles and functions not previously considered artistic see their creativity and authorship being recognised like interpreters, sound, light or costume designers (before labelled as technicians) to give some examples. As collective art forms (even when presented in a

¹ Pavis (1998) and Vlaams Theatre Instituut (VTI) (2007 and 2011). The VTI (2007) lists five emerging trends in the

form of a solo), performing arts are a territory of shared creativity where different voices and forces get together and act not only in terms of solidarity but also concurrently. The processes of individualisation and authorship within parallel logics of shared creativity are ambivalent according to Conde (1998 and 2009: 18) that describes:

The condition of individuals who are becoming, or expected to become, individualities by a distinguished (co)-signature. It is a dual experience for individuals of being not only actors in collective systems but also authors by personal commitment and achievement.

This portrait underlines the personal nature of artistic identities and professions at the same time shared with other contexts for authorship. Nicolas-Le Strat (1998: 39) has developed the concept of “*multiple creativity*” to describe artistic practice that is close to what was depicted above. According to this author, even when considering a single event – performance or show:

Artistic practice exists as a multiplicity, because it associates different competences, mixes genres, deconstructs its own references, and transgresses its own limits. This multiplicity is not only a feature, but also the way it functions.

Even the boundaries of the stage and consequently the roles and relationship between performers and audience have been constantly redrawn through various influences throughout the years. These practices have been taking this art to public spaces beyond institutionalised venues and put into question the very nature of art works and the overall role of art. Within this logic Haerdter (1996) on a speech about post-modern nomadism argues that some contemporary artists claim:

The need to experience the world and its many environments and cultures, to implement site specific research and projects.

This quote voices the desire of some artists to be temporarily part of communities, artistic but also non-artistic, attached to a territory, and to profit from the opportunity they offer for exchange and confrontation of ideas and hybridisation. This feature of contemporary art is associated to geographical mobility and to the willingness to travel.

Further than crossing administrative borders, it concerns also overcoming discipline boundaries and definitions, breaking distances and changing roles amongst creators, interpreters, set or sound designers, producers and audiences. These ongoing processes intensify transdisciplinary and intercultural exchanges within work practices and processes and this way the nature and shape of art works is questioned and reformulated.

Mike Featherstone (1990: 100) sums up interestingly the above features arguing that they define the post-modern condition in the arts field²:

The blurring of frontiers between art and daily life; the collapse of hierarchical distinctions between high and popular culture; the stylist promiscuity favouring the eclectic and mixture of codes; the decline of genius-originality of the artist.

In the background of all these artistic trends and alongside political and labour market logics (to be discussed further in this chapter “Creative potential to be unlocked” and in following Chapter 2 “Paradoxes of EU freedom of movement”), mobility is becoming an increasingly mean and expectation of performing arts professionals. In many cases, artists are not only willing to circulate, but also depending often on the possibility of working in different places and projects to reach wider audiences and enlarge their work prospects and conditions.

For some authors, such as Klaic (2007: 39), mobility has become a pre-condition of artistic development and career enhancement. According to this author internationalisation these days does not concern only an elite of recognised successful artists but it involves on a regular basis many professionals on their quest for information and knowledge, exchange and interaction, inspiration, and funding. Klaic stresses that artists have been mobile across Europe since long, but the possibility to set up common artistic projects cross-borders is recent. This cultural policy analyst refers to the growing number of international tours, co-creations and co-productions, workshops and conferences in the framework of the multiplication of festivals and of venues with international programmes and artistic residencies. When collaborating in joint creations and productions artists are going beyond the mere presentation or exchange of finished

² Conde (1998); Farinha (2003) and Klaic (2001 and 2007).

art pieces. Instead artists are joining temporary artistic teams, engaging in communities of interests and practices, creating and making use of social and professional platforms and networks and other artistic and professional organisations across borders.

The performing arts field intrinsic vitality and diversity fuelled more intensively lately by increased mobility expectations and practices heads to extra differences in, for instance, the production methods, the size of the groups, the political and aesthetical intentions and at the national level, the social status of performers.

When looking at the resulting work profiles the sector features a high occupational mobility and a large flexibility in the organisation of productions, build in terms of temporary projects where intermittence is the main form of employment. The most recent data published at EU level on cultural employment (EUROSTAT, 2011: 66) shows in brief, despite significant differences between countries, a sector and in particular an occupation “writers and artists” where tertiary education is much higher than in total employment, as well as the proportion of multiple job holders, temporary contracts, part-time employment and work from home.

These characteristics are translated onto a portfolio perspective with international expectations that is now a model foreseen across art forms and career stages (inscribed in general trends of nowadays labour markets discussed in the next sub-chapter “Creative potential to be unlocked” and showed in Martinho, 2010). In the past, a portfolio model was mostly associated with more individualised art forms, such as visual arts, for instance; and earlier career stages when emergent professionals are willing to accumulate new and diverse experiences.

Inkei (2009: 28) describes the portfolio career as a new logic within the culture sector in central eastern European countries in the last two decades moving from an institutionalised to a more dynamic arts sector. Yet his observation is valid for the contemporary performing arts sector across the whole of Europe:

Instead of moving up the steps of hierarchical structure, many artists are now moving up horizontally from one project to another, acquiring experience, skills and reputation reflected in their portfolio.

As a matter of fact, even if independent artistic practices are common in western Europe since longer, the performing arts have only at a later moment adopted in a larger sense this portfolio career paradigm. This step is linked with gradual individualisation logic within arts that are intrinsically collective (Conde, 1998; 2000 and 2010; Vlaams Theater Instituut, 2007 and 2011). Instead of envisaging the development of one's career by belonging to a pre-existent stable company – not necessarily permanently, as artists would change in the course of the years -, professionals take a more individual stance placing themselves in the centre of this process. They join and take initiative to create temporary teams and various individual projects and tend to assemble a diversity of skills and qualifications. Professionals hop from one work or training experience to another, following their own interests and needs while working along with others.

This dynamic requires informal temporary groups and individuals working on their own in a project basis, sometimes established in micro or small organisations. Many professionals are implicated simultaneously in several activities when not working as well outside the arts field as in some cases even holding permanent job positions. Multiple job holding and being polyvalent are common features, as professionals tend to assume several roles and tasks: creators, interpreters, managers, directors, producers, teachers or trainers and even light, costumes or sound designers to a lesser extent. Also they may work (and often do) for other media such as cinema, radio and television, as well as musicians for the record industry. Currently it becomes less pertinent to divide the sector between non-profit and commercial since professionals from both sides are fully aware of the links and are part of a constant movement and exchange between both worlds of creation and production.

Mobility is a crucial mean for feeding the set up and development of these experimental productions and prototypal character. In this course of action, the development of formal and informal ties, communities and networks across borders is another important feature of current performing arts scene. Networks, enabled by ICT, have been gradually taking the place of traditional diasporas in shaping and supporting the mobility of artists. These formal and informal structures are linking like-minded organisations and individuals over distance into an interactive and collaborative association, facilitating participative creation, exchange of information, promotion and

distribution of art processes and works (Staines, 1996; Fondazione Fitzcarraldo, 2003; Farinha, 2011). Gradually they are contributing to develop collaborative practices and a community of interests. Raj Isar (2011: 47) refers to these networks as “*epistemic communities*” notably recalling Haas and his classical political science definition:

A network of professionals with recognised competences and expertise in a particular domain and an authoritative claim to policy-relevant knowledge within that domain or issue-area.

These emergent community trends might be the first steps towards the sector collective organisation and action at EU level, that according to Schirky (2008: 51) are the hardest kind of group effort. This community development across borders comes as a response to the challenges of mobility. Actually the performing arts have a longer tradition of collective organisation and bargaining at the national level due to its collective nature when compared to other art forms. However in the last decades, the referred individualisation processes have dissolved this collective attitude that seems now to be re-discovered at European level due to intensified mobility and use of ICT. Coming together to share information and other resources and to develop identities of interests and practices is a growing need in order to overcome the fragmentation of the sector within the ever-changing wider EU market.

Fragile social position at home and abroad

However the flexibility and intense dedication required and the intricate working profile configured above set the scene for an uncertain and vulnerable social position intensified once geographical borders are crossed.

The openness and diversity acclaimed above result of the reduced professional and national regulation of the artistic activity. Artistic labour markets are, to use the concept of Catherine Paradeise (1998) “*open labour markets*”, where it’s difficult to establish precise criteria since profession, passion, vocation, art and life get mixed. The value of qualifications and certification is ambiguous as this activity is many times self-declared and diplomas do not set the line of access. Collective organisation and bargaining

remain difficult and one of the consequences is the absence of a specific professional status and social coverage in disease and retirement. This professional practice implies risks of labour accidents and careers still have a short life, despite current changes that have taken some of the focus away of the body thus postponing retirement age. All these features design an activity where the probabilities of low income are high and inadequate to the intellectual and physical effort demanded and where success is highly improbable.

High demanding levels of motivation and dedication contrast with fragile and precarious forms of work. Each artist carries the responsibility to be permanently on the scene and constantly look for work and keep on active and fit. Multiple job holding is one of the strategies that reduce the unpredictability of incomes.

Flexibility implies many risks to artists as workers, but also consequently to the sake of diversity of expression and artistic creation. If at the national level there is already in many of the member-states, a lack of regulation and of a specific protecting system, turned to the European stage this issue intensifies its complexity. Several studies³ on artists' social status and conditions for creation were carried throughout Europe in the last decade showing a great discrepancy.

The European Parliament (EP) has been active in bringing forward the place of cultural cooperation in the European integration process and notably the role of creators and their precarious social condition. Members of the European Parliament (MEP) such as Vaz da Silva (1999), Fraisse (2002) and Gibault (2007) have successively reported and drowned attention to artists' fragile position and exerted the member-states and the EU institutions to take action and put together a more favourable environment for these professionals.

In search for arguments to justify their potential action, the EP as well as the European Commission (EC), have been assigning studies to map artists and other culture workers social status and their consequent conditions for transnational mobility and proposing

³ Smiers (1998); European Parliament (1999; 2002 and 2007); Capiou (2000); Beckman (2001); ERICARTS (2001); MKW Wirtschaftsforschung (2001); Cliche and Wiesand (2002 and 2007); Farinha (2003); Staines (2004a); Capiou, Wiesand and ERICARTS (2006); Gomes and Martinho (2009); Martinho (2010).

policy recommendations. Also several non-governmental organisations (NGO) and networks operating at a European level have been quite dynamic in acknowledging and putting together comparative data and practical guides. As membership organisations they intend to provide practical information to their members' dazzling about what models exist, where they stand and what do they occur in when working internationally. On the other hand these studies sustain their advocacy campaigns defending the right to meet, move and work freely without bureaucratic, legal or fiscal snares.

Staines (2004a) compared frameworks for independent workers from the performing arts Europe-wide and pointed out the reduced level of social coverage and weak protection under employment legislation. She found certain similarities but many more differences between the systems.

Capiau, Wiesand and ERICARTS (2006) reported to the EP that artists constitute a coherent group of workers but their working conditions remain widely different. Their study portrays this employment diversity and high flexibility. If in some countries the needs of this professional group are not specifically addressed, in others, alternative or innovative solutions have been implemented within very different social traditions or cultural policy systems. Examples of these best practices are the recognition of an intermittent status in view of specific unemployment benefits; specific social coverage to self-employed artists; supplementary income to low level income professionals; tax relieves to creators. On the other hand, as the ERICARTS (2006) study on the causes of transborder mobility suggests, these specific socio-economic measures introduced in some countries may attract artists to travel and even set up temporary residences in order to benefit of these more advantaged conditions. Consequently it may provoke a brain drain in the sending countries and a general unbalanced situation across Europe in what the conditions for artists working and living is concerned. Thus the authors alert to the difficulty and lack of legal legitimacy to harmonise at the EU level such a transversal issue concerning so many different legal systems and institutional competences. Nevertheless, the report concludes that the socioeconomic position of artists is not improving due to specific legal impediments at both national and European level and that challenges are aggravated in the context of mobility, thus maintaining the status quo should not be an option.

Smiers (1998) in his tour of the state of the art of European creation some years before had already alerted for the more complex, vulnerable and precarious scenario for artists at the beginning of the 21st century when cultural industries and market pressures take control and impose its own rules to art works creation, dissemination and reception.

Moreover, the Creative Europe report (2002), bearing in mind these changes at the turn to the information society, analysed the conditions framing artistic creativity and cultural innovation. The recommendations argued for the necessity of shift of focus from existing national/public art and artists policies to a wider and more dynamic definition of creativity governance and management in a gradually integrating Europe. The report stands for a “minimum standard” of criteria in the development of policies, though previews that competing or even conflicting models, based on different cultural and legal traditions would persist.

Some years later, two of its authors, Cliche and Wiesand (2007), drafted a paper on new challenges for arts and artists and repeated once more that some issues remain unsolved and not systematically addressed in existing legal, social security and tax structures across Europe, such as irregular and unpredictable income; unremunerated research and development phases; accelerated physical tear and wear; and high levels of mobility.

This huge discrepancy of social status and working conditions in the European stage makes mobility quite intricate, complex and onerous despite these professionals’ willingness and prowess to be mobile. Therefore their condition when engaging in mobility requires special attention, so that live arts experimentation and production are kept free from the determinism of profit and audiences.

Intricate barriers and increasing circulation control

Long before the EU, performing artists have been travelling throughout Europe for education and inspiration but also for performing or establishing themselves in order to make a living. This commonly perception results of various references from art history, yet the fact is that literature on the history of the mobility of artists across Europe is scarce (this research barrier is discussed after in Chapter 4 “Recognising (performing)

artists as professionals across borders”). Quantitatively speaking there are no sources to elucidate on the numeric significance, in absolute and proportional terms, of artists mobility throughout times. There are instead several biographies⁴ of international famous painters, composers, writers and dancers. In this literature, their successes and achievements are better put forward than their difficulties. In addition, live arts as ephemeral leave fewer traces – despite music scores and dramaturgic writings -, so they have been less studied and its history is less well known (Bourcier, 1987).

Nevertheless some available sources⁵ allow sketching the following impressionistic pictures showing that artists in the past in different historic periods benefitted from an outsider position in relation to mobility. However throughout times the reach and scope of circulation control has been generally enlarging from the local to international level and artists along this way have lost their exceptional status.

In feudal Europe people were tied to lords and lands, so rule was local and of private nature. Peasants and servants needed authorisation to circulate as they were “attached to the soil”. Engaging in mobility meant to exist on the margins. So wandering troubadours, jugglers and minstrels entertained lords and aristocratic courts and existed outside of the obligations of place and roots thus freer to transgress some social hierarchies. However they had no place both geographically and socially and were condemned to wander looking for employment.

In Renaissance times foreign artists were invited to create and perform for monarchs, nobles as well as the church. In the same way, foreign masters were asked to come and teach local artists the new trends and techniques from other lands.

During the Enlightenment, in view of a society reform and advancement of knowledge, the emphasis on cultivating arts and the idea of travelling for the sake of learning, intellectual interchange and confrontation with other cultures was developed giving place to well-to-do “*Grand Tours*” of the continent and beyond and afterwards to tourism.

⁴ Schonberg (1988); Rosselli (1994) and Wagner (2005).

⁵ Torpey (2003) and Cresswell (2006).

In the meanwhile, the rise of mercantile capitalism and the development of cities pushed trade and its associated mobility. Then with industrialisation, the spread of railway, then steamships and air travelling, has allowed moving faster within Europe but as well as across the Atlantic. From these periods, there are records of artists and creators' journeys through Europe to get inspired, teach, and perform their pieces and from European singers and actors touring the United States of America (USA).

However gradually local authorities and then nation-states, especially after the French Revolution, had been taking up the monopoly of legitimate circulation means, imposing administrative borders and regulations. Yet still up until 1914 it was possible to travel from Paris to St. Petersburg without a passport. Travelling liberally in Europe came to a halt with the great wars and soon after its division into two opponent blocks. This particular historical moment pushed many artists to exile; among them many took the road to the USA, including many names that were central to the canon of modern art⁶. The practice of issuing passports and performing routine passport controls at national frontiers remained and became the norm in Europe until the implementation of the Schengen area in 1995.

Nowadays, the EU has lifted circulation control up to a supra-national level. Thus citizens are free to move within a larger territory than the nation-state, yet this freedom is highly regulated and subject to an elaborated system of control.

Paradoxically, due to developments in transports and communications as well as growing economic globalisation, human movements and migrations in general have increased in the last century most especially decades. According to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in 2010 there were 214 million estimated international migrants in the world, more 40 millions than in the first decade of the 21st century, from which approx. 1/3 lives in Europe (IOM, 2010). So the intensification of control reach and its international management might well be a response to this growth. In what comes to artists, many reports and investigations⁷ approached the different types, causes and consequences of artist's mobility in Europe showing a complexity not

⁶ Horowitz (2008).

⁷ MKW Wirtschaftsforschung (2001); Klaić (2001, 2002 and 2007); Audéoud (2002); Staines (2004b); Capiou (2006); ERICARTS (2006 and 2008); Weeda (2006); Poláček (2007); High Level Expert Forum on Mobility (2008); Gomes et al. (2010).

taken properly into account in the national or community legislation. The fact is that since Middle Ages artists have lost their outsider status and are now regulated as any other citizen or professional when they move across-borders. However, their professional activity keeps on scarcely regulated and artists' specific working practices design a complex profile that clashes with circulation rules intensifying their social fragility. Artists accumulate jobs and temporary work assignments and perform a multitude of activities that when developed across borders configure an intricate relation with the different national institutions.

From the literature dedicated to obstacles hindering the sector professionals' mobility and the ways to trim them down, Poláček (2007) has summed up the state of the art as:

The EU is space of legal fragmentation that leads to a feeling of uncertainty and acts as a disincentive to mobility.

This vagueness is felt strongly in the performing arts since it regards in many cases short-term circular moves that have repeatedly to face the same barriers. In addition, the sector's self-employed workers and micro and small organisations with few human resources, expertise and financial resources have extra difficulties to overcome it all. The EU is seen as a complicated puzzle of national regulations which supra-coordination is slow and intricate or it is ill adapted to the specificity of this sector. Procedures are complex and even incoherent but also burdensome, expensive and time-consuming. Moreover artists that tour or stay for short-term have an unequal position towards residents, as the status of non-resident is not incorporated into the systems.

The main challenges reported concern: social security; taxation; intellectual property rights; and visas and work permits. All of them, with the exception of intellectual property rights, concern as well other professionals engaging in mobility across the EU. Yet they impact particularly artists due to the complexity of their professional profile and status.

Regarding social security, the existing EU framework on coordination of schemes⁸ aims at guaranteeing that contributions and rights in the area of sickness, injury and invalidity insurance, pensions, unemployment and family benefits are accounted and preserved in

⁸ Modernised EU social security coordination: Regulations 2004/883/EC and 2009/987/EC on the coordination of social security systems.

the event of moving within the EU to settle, take holidays, work or study for a short or medium-term. However there is a lack of practical progress on the implementation of this coordination plan at national level. Regulations are often applied differently according to nationality and employment status. Many administrative difficulties persist in tracking artists' careers with many unrecognised working periods abroad. Several artists lose their entitlements, such as unemployment money, when going to another country where they have no residence status. In addition, often artists are due to double payments of social security both in their residence and their host country.

The system is complex to all parties involved, national administrations and beneficiaries. Yet social insurance is crucial to the many self-employed artists who bear the responsibility of their own social protection, especially as most of them have their body as one of their most important working tools. So the current state of affairs makes their mobility risky, unless they can themselves afford to pay the price of private insurances and medical treatment.

In what comes to fiscal barriers, the complexity and diversity of tax regulations in force in the EU increase paperwork and costs of mobility. Several delicate issues require specific expertise and give away to expensive and time-consuming procedures. There are disparate provisions and application among different countries and in respect to nationality whereas the definition of categories such as residency is increasingly less clear to determine in the EU free circulation market and many parallel bi-lateral agreements among countries (within the EU and with third countries) persist in relation to EU regulations. Certain host institutions might retain a withholding tax, a certain percentage of the fees, not always refundable, leading to double tax payment in the host and home country. The excessive taxation or lack of exemption for artists in certain countries (as the case for VAT - Value Added Tax) or impossibility of deductibility of expenses incurred when abroad once back home may serve as disincentives to be mobile. Within this scenario, only those that work cross-borders very frequently or are for any other reason better off may still find it compensatory after all taxes and administrative deductions as well as time and energy consumed.

The present intellectual property right protection system⁹ is not deemed favourable in a considerable part of the literature¹⁰. Smiers (2003) and ERICARTS (2005) stated that the current system provides little financial benefit for the average artist and thus are not an incentive to create. At the EU level this protection is even more reduced since the use of intellectual property' rights cross-borders is quite complex. The multitude of rights holders and its unclear scope, the intricate calculation of tariffs and definition of terms of licences, all complicate the clearance, use and claim of rights across borders. There is a proliferation and lack of reciprocity agreements between the different national systems and companies of managing and collecting royalties of artists. It results on serious difficulty in recovering the money due or disparities in the conditions applicable depriving artists of their rights.

Finally the need for visas and work permits for all those not entitled to free movement acts as a determinant hindrance to circulation¹¹. Third-country nationals who wish to enter the Schengen Area¹² have to meet specific entry conditions¹³ notably to hold a visa and/or work permit. Yet even those non-EU citizens who are already working in one EU country and who want to go temporarily to another EU country might see their ability to cross borders hindered. So not only does this affect people crossing into and out of the Schengen area: it is also an issue with regard to long-term stays within Schengen. In addition, some EU nationals might also be temporarily prevented from their right to access EU labour markets as the case of new member-states under transitory measures (discussed in Chapter 2 "Conflicting restrictions") and, to a lesser extent, confined only to border crossing limitations, all EU countries' nationals that are not within the Schengen Area¹⁴.

In this matter the EU is only competent to cover entry and short-term stays while each members-state¹⁵ is competent to apply its own regulations and admission criteria

⁹ Directive 2001/29/EC on the harmonisation of certain aspects of copyright and related rights in the information society; Directive 2004/48/EC on the enforcement of intellectual property rights.

¹⁰ For a perspective on abolishment of copyright see Smiers and Schijndel (2008);

¹¹ Neisse (2007); Reitov and Hjorth (2008); ERICARTS (2008).

¹² Parallel to the EU, the Schengen Area was established by a group of twenty-five European countries that agreed to abolish all border controls between each other. It originates from the agreement signed in the Luxembourgish town of Schengen in 1985, which has since been absorbed into the EU, except for Ireland and the United Kingdom. Three non-member states, Iceland, Norway and Switzerland, have also implemented the Schengen rules.

¹³ Regulation 2009/810/EC establishing a community code on visas.

¹⁴ The EU member-states that are outside the Schengen Agreement are: United Kingdom and Ireland, that opted to stay out; Cyprus, due to the dispute between Turkey and Greece in its territory; Bulgaria and Romania, that due to their recent accession to the EU (2007) have their entry onto Schengen previewed for late 2012.

¹⁵ At present EU competence covers entry and short-stay conditions of up to three months within a six-month period for third-country nationals who enter the Schengen area. The rules governing the issue of long-stay visas, work

without any coordination when concerning long-stays visas and work and residence permits. In some cases countries may impose priority lists or entry quotas for specific types of workers, not necessarily including the creative professionals.

This obstacle seriously affects mobility of performing artists due to administrative difficulties and high costs to obtain and/or renew these required documents whether for short or longer term. These restrictions weight very heavily on mobility and collaboration projects with third countries, most especially EU immediate neighbours, notably at the east and at south of the Mediterranean. In addition, the specificities of employment in this sector make it even more complex to cope, as it requires responses to irregular and unpredictable situations. The fast pace of happenings such as last minute scheduling and substitutions, due to illness for instance, make it hard to demand the adequate documents in due time. The need to schedule and plan group travels with a multitude of nationalities and status often carrying delicate or extra sized tools and goods increases the complexity of visa demand.

This particular obstacle to mobility is controversial and much contested in the cultural and arts scenes that feel it as a discriminative measure and serious limitation to their freedom. The sector professionals and organisations consider the right to mobility a fundamental freedom and denounce the difficulty of programming artists coming from outside the EU due to visa denials and impediments. They claim for more coordination at the EU level, more transparency, non-discriminatory procedures, and facilitation of entrance to non-EU artists in possession of a working contract with a cultural employer based in the EU. Among these voices some claim for a special visa for artists that would facilitate their short-term circular entrance needs into the EU. Recently, the MEP Schaake (EP, 2011), precisely in line with this plea, advocated for a similar system as the one put in place for foreign scientists¹⁶. However many contest this claim, even within the arts field, arguing that it is too difficult to define who qualifies as an artist to be granted this privilege. Artists themselves fear being framed within a definition imposed by others. In view of this controversial debate, it is difficult to envisage

permits and the admission and residence of third-country nationals for the purpose of exercising economic activities are not harmonised at EU level and are governed by the national law of each member state.

¹⁶ The report calls for the creation of a cultural visa for third-country nationals, artists and other professionals in the cultural field, along the lines of the existing Scientific Visa Programme in force since 2005; also asks the Commission to propose a short-term visa initiative with the aim of eliminating obstacles to mobility in the cultural sector.

unanimity among member-states to agree conceding this positive discrimination to artists.

The “new visa code” (Regulation 2009/810/EC) intended to increase transparency and simplify and accelerate procedures yet its application has only now started to be monitored and evaluated. At present, the harshening of restrictions set up by certain countries particularly sensitive towards immigration coming from the south, and their proposal to alter the Schengen Agreement¹⁷ sets up an even more difficult scenario.

In addition to the main and quite pressing legal-administrative challenges referred above, there are also other hindrances, including some of a more practical sort, that impact as well artists on their movement across the EU.

The uneven and inconsistent availability of information and structured knowledge is commonly considered one of the most structural thus important barrier to tackle¹⁸. ECOTEC’s study (2009) on behalf of the European Commission has tried to shed light and structure how and where artists and cultural operators source the information that enables their mobility to take place. This information is diversified, rapidly changing and outdated. The fact is that the general information made available by the EU and governments in the form of portals and advice services to inform on rights and promote the mobility of citizens (indicated in Chapter 2 “Unaccomplished single market”) is not much used by the arts sector that it is not acquainted with these references and finds the raw information provided not targeted enough¹⁹. The sector professionals’ demand interpreted and adapted information.

In this complex environment in between information shortcomings and incomprehensible abundance, social and professional networks²⁰ have a preponderant role as information mediators. The same ECOTEC study highlighted that professionals

¹⁷ France and Italy in 2011 demanded to broad the mechanism that allows states to temporarily suspend their Schengen commitments in view of the increased afflux of immigrants to their south borders that coincide with the south external borders of the EU.

¹⁸ MKW Wirtschaftsforschung (2001); Audéoud (2002); ERICARTS (2008); ECOTEC (2009); EMPIRICA (2010); Open Method of Coordination (OMC) working group on the mobility of artists and culture professionals (2010).

¹⁹ Following the OMC working group on the mobility of artists and culture professionals final report (2010), the Council of the EU (2011) has voted a recommendation to the EC and the member-states on the establishment of mobility information services specific for artists and culture professionals.

²⁰ Farinha (2011).

on the move obtain and use information through the use of complex networks, in which both formal and informal knowledge and information play key, and often complementary, roles²¹. In this respect the use of digital tools such as the internet and its web based services are becoming essential to access, produce, present and understand this complex information. In addition to printed media, ICT allows also social interactivity that adds contacts and experiences to the raw data.

Still information is pulverised and thus complex to access. In fact there is a lack of coordination²² between existing information sources and providers at the different geographical and political levels linking data specific to the concerns and opportunities of this concrete field.

Another important hindrance is the fact that having diplomas and qualifications recognised²³ abroad is particularly burdensome requiring a lot of paperwork and efforts. This issue, that the Bologna process²⁴ is gradually diminishing, affects particularly professions that are very much regulated, such as doctors and lawyers, yet impacts less artists not dependent on degrees and diplomas to be accepted as such. However it can still be troublesome when artists need to certify their status, and often they do, notably when they are willing to take up teaching and academia posts or requiring to be integrated into professional bodies and trade unions.

Labour law is also subject to variations between countries and sectors and giving place to disparate conditions, requirements and benefits. In this respect too, EU directives are ill-adapted to the specificities of the performing arts and in many cases do not safeguard the needs of professionals yet adding up another level of complexity to deciphering rights and duties.

Cultural and language barriers can also be quite hindering to the performing arts even though often taken for granted by most of the dedicated literature. Actually cultural and

²¹ Many web portals, organisations and initiatives of the arts and culture sector aim at gathering and providing information for mobility. For the mapping of these dynamics and agents see: ECOTEC (2009) and EMPIRICA (2010).

²² OMC working group on the mobility of artists and culture professionals (2010) and EU Council (2011).

²³ Directive 2005/36/EC on the recognition of professional qualifications.

²⁴ The Bologna Declaration was signed by the ministers of education of 29 European countries in this Italian city in June 1999. This process aims to create a European higher education area in which students can choose from a wide range of courses divided into three cycles and benefit from recognition of qualifications and periods of studies abroad.

linguistic issues can influence both the effectiveness of working processes and outcomes as well as the relation and communication with audiences. Art forms such as music and dance less hindered by language have been considered universal thus there are many records of international careers among dancers, musicians and composers, for instance. In what comes to theatre, especially when making central use of text, these hindrances have always been determinant reducing seriously the aptitude of theatre professionals to collaborate and plays to tour internationally. In this respect, contemporary theatre is increasingly developing international aspirations and practices resulting in a diversity of approaches – from multilingual to physical – that diminishes this barrier on stage and in face of the audiences. However nowadays contemporary artistic working processes less hierarchical and a lot more shared, whether in the field of dance, music and theatre, may increase the need for communication competences, especially when happening across borders, notably those of languages, disciplines, and backgrounds (this issue will be further discussed in Part II – Chapter 6 “Lost in translation at the backstage”).

Finally practical obstacles that relate to spheres of a more private nature, such as housing, family reunion and the articulation of dual career couples also have impact on the decision to move as well as on the effectiveness of mobility experiences. Though again, in the arts field, literature does not pay much attention to these types of obstacles. The principle that artistic careers require an intensive total dedication thus the need to put aside family interests and under evaluate practical dimensions and efforts is commonly accepted, including by many arts professionals themselves.

As a consequence of this intricate scenario described above, featuring disparate conditions and obstacles to creation and mobility, the EU features an unbalanced and often unidirectional circulation (Klaic, 2001; ERICARTS, 2006). This bottleneck is a challenge for the EU at different levels. First of all the EU project aims at promoting harmonised development within its territory, in view of a common market that is dynamic and based on a balanced movement of persons. Moreover, in relation to the arts, the EU is being asked to contribute to facilitate artists’ mobility and to create a more interesting framework for their professional profile not attained at national level.

The *European Social Dialogue Committee for the Performing Arts*²⁵ set up in 2001 is meant to discuss employment and social policy at EU level and translates already a political recognition of the specificities of this professional group.

Klaic's essay (2001) portraying the vitality and vulnerability of the performing arts recommends:

The consolidation of the socio-economic position of these professionals taking into account their specific working conditions and mobility so that international artistic collaboration becomes more fruitful and artists-driven rather than to run on political or economic interests and contingencies.

The arts sector organisations at EU level have been proclaiming the importance and immeasurable benefits of artists' mobility to artistic development but also in relation to the EU integration project. Actually the EU stage has been setting the ground for the development of arts and culture non-governmental organisations (NGO) and networks that have supporting artists' mobility in various ways (Farinha, 2011). These organisations offer informal exchange of information, promote good practices, training and reflection, serve as intermediates in the search for partners and put forward advocacy and lobbying initiatives in order to promote the sector interests and needs in different levels of governance.

The sector's main arguments for mobility, using again the words of Klaic (2002) are:

If not for the sake of artistic experimentation itself, the political argument of reinforcing trust and security in Europe (and the rest of the world) and simultaneously breeding constructive criticism seems strong enough to support exchanges and consequently build up of intercultural ties among artists, cultural managers and audiences. Investment in these activities on the EU level will stimulate more complex and enriching multilateral initiatives and bridge the gaps among mutually not fully compatible national culture systems.

²⁵ EC (2004) Partnership for change in an enlarged Europe - Enhancing the contribution of European social dialogue, COM(2004) 557 final, Brussels.

The cultural dimension, in his opinion and of many other artists, cultural operators and cultural policy experts, is needed in order to make the European project felt by the citizens.

As cultural policy is an area of complementary action²⁶ in the EU, in the recent years, the promotion of mobility of artists and culture professionals as well as their artworks has been placed within the main targets of cultural cooperation²⁷. In 2007 the European Commission proposed a new role for culture in a globalised world and in the European integration project (EC, 2007b). This first-ever Community strategy for the sector and its relations with third countries includes the fostering of mobility of arts professionals and their expressions beyond national borders within its first objective of promoting cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue. Yet the most significant step forward relates to the enhancement of the cooperation among member-states and a structured dialogue with the cultural sector organisations using the Open Method of Coordination (OMC) from 2008 on. At both levels, working groups dedicated to discuss artists and culture professionals' mobility as well as the circulation of goods were created (OMC Working Group on Mobility of Artists and Culture Professionals, 2010 and Platform on the potential of culture and creative industries, 2009).

In the meanwhile, the European Commission has launched with the support of the EP a pilot scheme for artists' mobility²⁸ supposed to test new ideas and tools and feed future policy making. This pilot programme included notably a call for networking of structures supporting mobility to capitalise on the knowledge and experience accumulated among organisations; and another call to enable contributions to the operational costs of transnational mobility funds and programmes on the basis of the results of the study "Mobility Matters" (ERICARTS, 2008) on the funding schemes to mobility.

The EU political interest on the promotion of mobility in the arts field as flagship for free movement promotion combined with the attempt to develop a cultural dimension needed to put citizens in the centre of the integration process, can be seen as favourable

²⁶ Lisbon Treaty, Art. VIII-167.

²⁷ The European Commission's Culture programme (2007-2013) main objectives are the promotion of the mobility of people working in the cultural sector and the encouragement of transnational circulation of artistic and cultural output alongside the fostering of intercultural dialogue.

²⁸ http://ec.europa.eu/culture/our-programmes-and-actions/artist-mobility_en.htm (accessed in April 2012).

to the arts sector as it may bring in support to trim down barriers and improve conditions for creation.

However a critical attitude towards political and economical agendas that pursue the promotion of mobility is required. It is crucial to develop a systematic in-depth analysis and debate on the causes, conditions and consequences of mobility as it may contribute to redefine the market for the performing arts. This research proposes therefore to dissect the different aspirations; to explore beyond the above reported legal-administrative barriers; and to analyse how mobility is provoking changes to performing artists working practices and profiles.

Creative potential to be unlocked

The profile of performing artists as designed in this chapter is considered atypical when compared to most professional fields. However changes in labour markets' logics and targets, globally and across the EU, have turned artists' competences desirable to other intellectual professional profiles. So artists seem to be setting trends in the fields of work too (Nicolas-Le Strat, 1998 and 2000). In fact, traditionally, this field has always been considered a nest for creativity and innovation, where the development of new practices and forms of expression take place. Nowadays these skills are becoming important resources in the labour market associated to the development and potential of the culture and creative industries²⁹. Mobility of artists and artworks in this scenario is considered crucial to feed this creative market.

The link between culture and economy (at a mass scale) has been dealt in the past with scepticism and even despair in the European tradition of cultural criticism that served as a legitimating basis for the European welfare-state perspective of culture and the arts. Those authors, such as Adorno and Horkheimer³⁰, have criticised consumption and

²⁹ Cultural and creative industries produce and distribute goods or services which at the time they are developed are considered to have a specific attribute, use or purpose which embodies or conveys cultural expressions, irrespective of the commercial value they may have. Besides the traditional arts sectors (performing arts, visual arts, cultural heritage – including the public sector), they include film, DVD and video, television and radio, video games, new media, music, books and press (EC, 2010a and KEA, 2006).

³⁰ ADORNO, T. (2002) "The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception" in ADORNO, T. and HORKHEIMER, M., *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Stanford University Press.

mass reproduction of art works and argued that culture's orientation towards the market requirements destroyed its critical impact. So until recently, economic or labour-market policies had little interest for arts and culture. It was an atypical field not assumed to be calculated economically or considered a competitive factor.

Yet today, the extension to a global scale of the arts and culture sector, along with the emergence of a service and leisure society, has enlarged its importance in the fields of economy and employment. The increase and diversification of cultural and artistic professions, nourished by the explosion of cultural and creative industries and the demand for new contents, has generated new divisions of labour and raised questions to the artist's social status as well as their working conditions. The reconfiguration of the market for art works and professionals in contexts of mediatisation and globalisation, the redefinition of intellectual property rights in the information society, the boost of the integration of creation in work processes and the value of the role of intermediates and managers, come as new challenges for the world of culture and the arts. Martinho (2010) has stressed the direct link between the spread of flexible forms of employment as a source of job and work opportunities and the increase of artistic and cultural offer as well as cultural employment.

In parallel, more global changes in the nature of societies as well as in the character of the states are provoking new developments to the fields of work and employment. Kovacs (2005) clarifies that the spread of flexible forms of employment is part of the processes of productive restructuring and labour market flexibilisation in the context of growing competition in the global economy. The growth of the risk society³¹ and the decline of trust as well as developments in the post-modern and international state, all pose new challenges to professions as social institutions. The increase in leisure time in certain professional activities but also unemployment and population ageing, have put into question the redistribution of available work in a society where the nature of paid work is changing, whereas the employee was the ideal type.

In response to all these macro changes and in order to upgrade Europe's competitiveness to face expanding global markets especially in relation to new

³¹ This concept refers to a society that is increasingly preoccupied with the future thus organized in response to risk as a systematic way of dealing with insecurities. Cf. Beck (2001) and Giddens (1992).

emerging economies, the EU has developed a long-term strategy³² aimed at fostering sustainable growth and employment alongside social cohesion in the framework of a knowledge-based economy. The need to improve human resources qualifications and match competences to actual labour market developments by investing in lifelong learning and supporting small and medium enterprises (SME) and the enhancement of geographical mobility are among the main objectives. Moreover the EU³³ has labelled freedom of movement of knowledge as the “5th freedom”, adding up to that of persons, goods, capitals and services. In this action and development plan the role of creativity and innovation and its contribution to personal, social and economical development is put forth (EC, 2010b and 2010d). The rationale is that this framework would be the motor for the creation of a pan-European market for innovative products and services result of the investment in human capital.

Therefore the EU, associated to its political targets, has been creating opportunities for citizens to move around for educational or professional purposes making it easier to take advantage of the benefits of European integration as the basis to nurture a skilled and adaptable labour force (EC, 2002a). The EU education and training policy³⁴ in which lifelong learning³⁵ became a key concept, alongside the Bologna Process, is supposed to feed the constant renewal of skills considered crucial to meet the challenges of ever-evolving technologies and increased internationalisation. Within this scenery, more mobility on the labour market to deal with skills bottlenecks or imbalances, be it between jobs or member-states, is integral to this ambition, and improving skills levels and removing barriers to mobility became essential.

Moreover, this policy represents a turn towards the encouragement of the individual input and responsibility for education, qualification and employability along with the withdrawal of the welfare state. As a matter of fact, this plan is drawn upon the development of basic individual features such as mobility, flexibility, adaptability and entrepreneurship. The “entrepreneurial individual”, as someone who does not follow prescribed standards but tries out its own scheme in the market throughout a process of

³² Translated into policy documents such as the “Lisbon Agenda” (2000) and the EU2020 strategy (2010).

³³ Brussels European Council 13/14th March 2008 Slovene Presidency Conclusions, Brussels: Council of the European Union 7652/1/08.

³⁴ For the history of EU cooperation in education and training: Pépin (2006).

³⁵ The European Lifelong Learning programme enables individuals at all stages of their lives to pursue learning opportunities across Europe.

lifelong learning is turning into another key concept of what is considered a dynamic labour market³⁶. In this respect, the European Commission has developed and adopted³⁷ a set of key competences for lifelong learning, namely the “European Reference Framework” (EC, 2007a), that meant to be a “*combination of knowledge, skills and attitudes that individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment*” (the concept of competences will be further developed in Chapter 3 “From right to competence”). This list comprises key competences such as: communication (including foreign languages), mathematical, digital, strategic and entrepreneurial, as well as social, civic and cultural.

In this context specific professional training seems to be losing its former significance and what starts to count is no longer the profession learned but the skills and abilities one has to offer. Education, through this perspective, serves as the basis of knowledge but is no longer a guarantee of a specific job. The growing importance of the so-called career portfolio (described before in this Chapter “Open, diverse and prototypical character“) is inscribed in this logic.

When referring these developments back into the performing arts sector, this field comes out as apparently ideally prepared to face current economical and employment challenges. Competences such as mobility, flexibility, adaptability and creativity have always been familiar to performing artists’ profile. Indeed, the last figures from EUROSTAT (2011) – portrayed in this Chapter “Open, diverse and prototypical character” - show a dynamic attitude towards work and careers, translated into the large proportion of professions self-employed, working in temporary projects and accumulating several activities as well as an engagement towards continuous professional training and education.

However artists are not always associated to an entrepreneurial attitude that is also one of the key competences put forward by the EU. In the same way as between culture and the economy, the link between arts and entrepreneurship is neither consensual nor direct.

³⁶ In 2009 the programme *Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs* was initiated aiming at facilitating exchanges of experience, learning and networking for new EU entrepreneurs by means of working with an experienced entrepreneur in another EU country.

³⁷ Recommendation 2006/962/EC on key competences for lifelong learning.

This tension is analysed on the study by the Utrecht School of the Arts (HKU) (2010: 7) on the entrepreneurial dimensions of the creative and culture industries:

The term is not always well accepted in the cultural sector, as it is still overly associated with a financial dimension while not sufficiently recognising the cultural and social values behind. On the other hand, the cliché of the artist who cannot manage a business and lacks financial skills is still commonly held among economic policy-makers and influences the ongoing distinction between entrepreneurship policies and cultural policies.

Despite the profusion of definitions regarding entrepreneurship within the cultural and creative industries, authors such as Hagoort (2004 and HKU, 2010: 59) have been using the term “cultural entrepreneurship” to mean:

The process of integrating two freedoms: artistic freedom as immaterial content oriented value, and entrepreneurial freedom as material value, supportive to immaterial (cultural) values.

(...)

In essence, a cultural and creative entrepreneur can be understood as someone who creates or innovates a cultural or creative product or service and who uses entrepreneurial principles to organize and manage creative activity in a commercial manner.

This above quoted study (HKU, 2010) points out the lack of entrepreneurial type of skills in the arts sector essential for enterprise growth, market orientation, return on creativity, communications skills, networking, and team building within the entrepreneurial lifecycle. It argues there is a need to combine artistic ambitions with organisational, financial and networking expertise.

When bearing in mind the individual performing artists and their mobility in the EU we may deduct the same need to hold the above associated competences in parallel with artistic skills and intents. These mix of competences is necessary to the pursuit of any artistic career whether at national or European level. Yet in the latter, the wider dimension and scope of opportunities but also risks and costs makes this portfolio essential to survive. This assumption remains valid even if an artist works with experts

in the above domains, such as managers or public relations. Normally very few have the conditions to hire these professionals to permanently assist their individual creative work, especially in the very beginning of their careers. Nonetheless, working in a team along with these experts still requires that artists know how to lead, delegate, negotiate, and discuss ideas, aims and plans with all partners involved. So a basic knowledge of these competences is crucial. Therefore artists and in the same way their creative and cultural enterprises might not be so well prepared to face mobility and current labour market challenges.

Indeed studies³⁸ undertaken on the creative and culture sector revealed that the EU political and economical referred agendas do not take properly into account the potential strength of this sector thus disregarding contributions and special needs of millions of individuals, initiatives and businesses (Wiesand and Söndermann, 2005). Data available³⁹ (EUROSTAT, 2011 and EC, 2010a) indicates that in 2009 cultural employment represented around 1.7% of the EU total employment, corresponding to 3638.5 million jobs; and that the sector contributed with 2,6% to the EU Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

However, the contribution of the cultural and creative sector to the European economy is not limited to its direct and quantifiable impact. The sector explores and generates new content and thus feeds other sectors and fields of society, thereby indirectly contributing to economic performance and development in general. Kaufmann and Raunig (2002) refer that:

There is a tendency to focus on the possibilities of economic exploitation rather than on the critical, participatory and political potential of cultural content. Culture and creativity are also empowering resources in educational and social development adding to Lisbon's social objectives.

³⁸ MKW Wirtschaftsforschung (2001); Wiesand and Söndermann (2005); KEA (2006); Utrecht School of the Arts (HKU) (2010).

³⁹ Many authors alert for the shortcomings in data availability in this sector that might be leading to an under-estimation of its real weight and contribution to economy (further developed in Chapter 4 "Recognising (performing) artists as professionals across borders").

These intangible assets are not reflected into financial and economical records therefore their economic value is not recognised.

Overall, what comes under the frame of culture and creative industries is quite diverse in terms of functioning and goals. Within this large group, special attention shall be paid to artists' status and their micro-SMEs specific needs within global markets. The persistence of obstacles acts as a dissuasive factor to their mobility increasing their fragile social condition.

As a matter of fact despite the proclaimed target to invest on innovation and creativity, references to the arts sector itself and concrete measures that take into account its specificities are mostly absent from EU main strategic agendas (EC, 2010d). In addition, the proclaimed 5th freedom, that of knowledge, points out researchers, scientists, students and university teaching staff yet omits arts professionals.

On the other side, the rhetoric of labour flexibility, adaptability and mobility, according to Beck (Onghena 2008: 210), can be read as a set of instructions “*to abandon hard-won rights not just of economic life but of culture*”. The European Commission attempt to induce flexicurity policies into the member-states (EC, 2007d) is also proven to be taking long to produce effects. Flexicurity is in these documents defined as an “*integrated strategy to enhance, at the same time, flexibility and security in the labour market*”. The main idea is the change from the conception of job security to career security. However, most especially the recommended reform of the social security systems to ensure benefits for those most at risk, notably a broader coverage of social protection provisions (unemployment, pensions and healthcare) have been left aside or even seriously reduced in most countries in view of the present financial crisis.

Beck (idem: 211) also points out that this structural transformation of the world of work has drastic consequences for individual biographies:

A world of creative one-person businesses has grown up, which entails highly motivated self-exploitation.

So the high expectations put upon individuals and in the case of artists, on their potential role for contributing to EU growth and knowledge society targets, are not being translated onto specific improvements of working conditions nor social status that would allow them to safely be able to generate the desired creative content. When artists' conditions are at danger than so is the preservation of a space for processes and products that are not immediately marketable but are essential to a free experimentation and plural development of arts and culture.

Therefore this research has chosen performing artists as an empirical case to study mobility impediments and explore its hidden logics. In between flexibility and vulnerability, this professional category may mirror the precariousness that might lie behind the proclaimed mobility prospects.

2. PARADOXES OF EU FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

Unaccomplished single market

Migrations are a constant of history whether out of territorial, political, economical or social disparities. Or just out of pure human curiosity and will. However circulation restrictions have as well been common throughout times though its scope and reach have been amplified from private and local nature to public and national (discussed in Chapter 1 “Intricate barriers and increasing circulation control”). Yet the Treaty of Rome, in 1957, has legitimated freedom of movement to persons, goods and capitals as a fundamental right and a basic pillar of the common market⁴⁰ elevating this control to a supra-national level within the EU.

However many decades after the Treaty of Rome, the single market is yet to be done, especially in what concerns the movement of people. Surprisingly (or not) despite the right to free movement and its political and economical promotion, geographical mobility⁴¹ is not a common practice among EU citizens. Data from 2007 reveals that only 18% of the Europeans have left their region of origin, while 4% live or work in another member-state and 3% have left the EU (EUROFOUND, 2007: 6 and MKW Wirtschaftsforschung, 2009: 7)⁴².

Initially geared solely towards economy and trade, in fact this fundamental right aimed only at economically active persons. In those times, migrants were seen as mere movable production factors that would fill gaps and needs in the different national labour markets in line with a functionalist conception of European integration as an economic enterprise⁴³.

⁴⁰ Free movement of workers is enshrined in the Art IV-45-48 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU (TFEU).

⁴¹ Job mobility within the EU is also low: EUROFOUND (2006) and (2007).

⁴² A more recent publication (EC, 2010c: 2) refers to not quoted EUROSTAT data from 2008 that advances lower figures: only 2.3% of EU citizens (11.3 million persons) reside in a member state other than the state of which they are citizens.

⁴³ For a detailed evolution of the EU free movement principle: Recchi in FAVELL and SMITH (2006).

Yet essentially after the nineties on⁴⁴ the purely economic agenda has started to give place as well to a gradual number of policy areas⁴⁵ – such as political and foreign affairs, social issues and employment, education and training, culture, environment, security, justice and home policy – and the workers have become full right citizens. Nowadays they have the right to move, travel, live, work, study and retire without frontiers.

The long process of establishing a new legal framework for the EU that culminated in the Treaty of Lisbon (2007) has been stressing the need to reinforce the EU as a political entity and a union of citizens. The general unawareness or gap between EU institutions and citizens that regard the Union as merely a remote economic entity is affirmed by several authors, studies and opinion polls⁴⁶ and usually demonstrated by a high turnout to EU parliamentary elections⁴⁷. This gap led the EU to officially⁴⁸ consider the development of citizenship as a main priority by means of an intensified communication strategy trying to inform citizens, provide them with EU experiences and stimulate their feelings of belonging through panoply of information services, campaigns and programmes. In this respect, mobility is being assumed as well politically as a tool to raise citizens' awareness and involvement in the integration project while becoming a valuable skill and lifelong learning target.

However several studies and policy papers⁴⁹ as well as initiatives⁵⁰, have illustrated the variety and negative impact of obstacles to mobility within the EU and argued for a favourable environment.

Actually when intra-EU mobility values are compared with those of the USA where a quarter (32%) of its citizens lives outside its state of origin, many argue it is an inadequate association since intra-US migrations are done within the same political,

⁴⁴ Changes mostly introduced by the Single European Act (1986) and the Treaties of Maastricht (1992) and Amsterdam (1997).

⁴⁵ These policy areas are of complementary competence by the Union because they are considered national policy areas of significance to identity. It means that member-states remain fully competent in these domains and the EU may assist and supplement the national policies.

⁴⁶ Balibar (2001); EUROFOUND (2006 and 2007).

⁴⁷ However this turnout has been gradually decreasing: in 2009, the last EU Parliamentary elections registered a participation level of 43%, the lowest turnout ever since the creation of the Union.

⁴⁸ EC (2004) "Making citizenship work: fostering European culture and diversity through programmes for Youth, Culture, Audiovisual and Civic Participation", COM(2004) 154.

⁴⁹ High Level Task Force on Skills and Mobility (2001); EC (2002b, 2007b, 2010b and 2010c); EUROFOUND (2006 and 2007); High Level Expert Forum on Mobility (2008); Institut zur Zukunft der Arbeit (2008).

⁵⁰ The year 2006 was proclaimed the *European Year of Workers Mobility* in praise of free circulation and engagement to discuss restrictions for people willing to move to other countries or regions to find a job.

cultural and linguistic framework opposing to what happens in Europe. Regardless of EU efforts to develop instruments of coordination envisaging the itinerancy of many rights, integration is limited. For EU citizens the sense of belonging to a place and identity play a very important role.

Williams (in Recchi et al., 2003) draws a quite clear EU picture:

For international migrants moving into or within Europe, the region represents a blurred map of disjointed spaces, uneven and differentiated rights, punctuated by borders of variable porosity. The freedom of movement of labour provisions, later widened to freedom for persons, has had a limited impact on this politicised landscape of migration rights, in terms of either imposing a second tier 'European mobility space', or of harmonizing the national systems of regulation.

Moving between member-states can involve considerable barriers of diverse sort (discussed in detail for the specific case of performing artists within Chapter 1 “Intricate barriers and increasing circulation control”) such as legal and administrative regulations - social security, taxation, visas and work permits, diplomas, qualifications and professional certification recognition -; access to quality targeted information; cultural and linguistic as well as more practical issues like housing and other family related affairs.

Most of these barriers link to issues needed to be tackled in a coordinated way at various geographical and political levels, from national to European. The EU has been developing instruments in order to smooth the hindrances of living in between systems as well as trying to commit member states to integrate their different legal systems in a diversity of problem-areas that fall into their exclusive competence. Yet transposition of directives is a member state responsibility therefore often slow and disparate within the EU. In addition lack of training and resistance to change of public officials responsible for their application as well as lack of investment on dissemination and debate onto the national public space delays the advancements.

In what comes to information needs, several services⁵¹ put in place by the EU together with member-states have been trying to act as one-stop-shop aiming at spreading awareness of rights (and duties) and of existing mechanisms as well as making bridges between the different authorities and citizens. However most of these services have troubles in communicating their offer and reaching a diverse target audience; many are centralised within capital cities; and information provided is not targeted enough.

At the cultural and linguistic levels, the EC's exchange and cooperation programmes⁵² in education, training and culture fields followed by other policy areas such as research and enterprise, have been promoting a culture of mobility in different life contexts, professional settings and age groups, facilitating mobility experiences to citizens.

However in practice the access to EU labour markets and the reach of opportunities for lifelong learning as well as job and geographical mobility are not widespread throughout the EU.

Results of the Lisbon agenda monitoring reports⁵³ show, the need to reduce the number of early school leavers and to increase the participation of adults in lifelong learning as well as income inequalities. Moreover a survey on the socio-economic background of Erasmus students (ECOTEC, 2006), the programme for mobility within higher education, evidenced that a great deal of beneficiaries comes from family backgrounds that hold financial and educational capitals. These family resources are crucial to nurture mobility aspirations and practices from an early age and also to cover full expenses abroad as the grants revealed also insufficient. So the actual number and diversity of people benefiting of these cooperation and mobility programmes has proven to be low.

⁵¹ Your Europe: information for citizens and businesses; Citizens Signpost Service; Europe Direct; SOLVIT: online problem solving network; Eulisses: links and information on social security; MISSOC: mutual info system on social protection in Europe; PLOTEUS: learning opportunities throughout the European space; and EURES: European job mobility portal.

⁵² Culture; Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs; Erasmus Mundus; Europe for Citizens; Lifelong Learning; Marie Curie; Tempus; Youth in Action; Youth on the Move.

⁵³ European Commission (2007) *Progress towards the Lisbon Objectives in education and training*, 2007 Indicators and Benchmarks, Brussels: (SEC(2007)1284); EUROSTAT (2008) *The Social Situation in the EU 2007*, Brussels: EC.

This scenario reveals that this extended labour market might not be accessible to all as proclaimed by the EU (EC, 2001). It requires skilfulness as well as awareness and capacity to access information on EU rights and opportunities. These prerequisites are most likely to be found within the better educated and those with a more comfortable socio-economic background to dare to play in the EU arena.

When inscribing performing artists within this wider political and economical framework, their higher education levels and the fact that many come from better off social-economic family backgrounds⁵⁴, seem to minor the risk and costs of their mobility. However this mobility is developed on their own (or of their families) social expenses as they are incited to dive into an intricate European scene without adequate safety net. The study of the mobility of this particular professional group allows depicting the precariousness that lies behind the benefits. In a moment that welfare states are withdrawing, markets and societies seem to be unwilling to provide a new social agenda. The effective implementation of the principles of flexicurity would ensure citizens a proper framework to make a safe European step.

Conflicting restrictions

The EU inner-liberty is not universal. Freedom of movement refers to EU nationals and it is subject to various restrictions that set the scene for contradictions. Within the EU free area many obstacles prevail and among those privileged to circulate freely only a few are convinced enough to give it a try. On the other side of the EU walls (and even within), besides heavy restrictions, an increasing number of third country nationals are anxious to circulate.

Even within EU nationals there are optional transitional restrictions⁵⁵ to be set up by each of the older members to manage workers coming into their economies from new

⁵⁴ MENGER, P.-M. (1997) *La Profession de Comédien: Formations, Activités et Carrières Dans la Démultiplication de Soi*, Paris: La Documentation Française; RENGERS, M. (2002) *Economic Lives of Artists. Studies into careers and the labour market in the cultural sector*, ICS, Universiteit Utrecht; EUROSTAT (2011); Abbing (2002); Farinha (2003).

⁵⁵ These measures are presently in force in some countries towards workers coming from Bulgaria and Romania (until 31.12.2013), as it happened in the past upon the accession to the Union of states from the south and from other central and eastern locations.

EU members, limiting their movements. On top, in the EU territory live and work many to whom the free movement right is not entitled: third country nationals get to see their mobility hindered by the need of residence and work permits and visas⁵⁶. Finally, those coming from outside that are willing to visit or settle in the EU, under the competence rule of national immigration policies, endure intensified control and restrictions.

In what comes to the “probation period” inflicted to new members, many voices, from civil society to authorities, claimed against this “unfinished” enlargement addressing the discriminative way in which new citizens were treated under these non-welcoming measures. Post enlargement evaluations⁵⁷ showed that for the EU as a whole, flows of workers have been rather limited (below the 1% forecasted at the time of accession negotiations), and workers’ mobility from central and eastern Europe to EU15 has had mostly positive effects and has been quantitatively less important and more temporary than foreseen. In fact, no evidence has been found that there is a direct link between the levels of migration and transitional arrangements.

Despite of the reported advantages of new member-states nationals having access to their labour markets, citizens of Western Europe remain somewhat wary and not convinced. The fact is that media in these countries has spread images of eastern Europeans flooding labour markets and taking jobs away from host country nationals. These views on migration emphasise only negative aspects considering it a threat to social and political stability and development.

Yet, the European population is ageing and authorities are recognising the need to welcome immigrants to fill in the demographic gap and supply the job market with the adequate labour force. Still regulations as well as public opinions do not translate or consider seriously this urge. In this respect labour markets and political spheres have contradictory demands and opinions.

⁵⁶ Despite the Directive 2003/109/EC *concerning the status of third-country nationals who are long-term residents*, aiming at assuring they are granted a set of uniform rights which are as near as possible to those enjoyed by EU citizens.

⁵⁷ Chow (2006); EC (2006) *Report on the Functioning of the Transitional Arrangements set out in the 2003 Accession Treaty*, Brussels: COM(2006)48 and Traser (2006).

Migration is therefore a rising issue on EU political and media agendas. Policy makers and the general public are confronted with a substantial degree of confusion also due to the deficient knowledge and information available and the use of vague and unclear concepts. Statistics are partial and sometimes contradictory: the record of the diverse forms of mobility is often random, occasional and based on estimates. The pictures presented of population movements are incomplete and misrepresent the complexity of the phenomena. And arguments for and against migration are based either on fear and prejudice against foreigners or naïve ideas of an easy path towards a multicultural society. EU discourse on “unity in diversity” gets stuck with disparate national entrance criteria and integration policies based on the nation-state paradigm are imposed unilaterally on foreigners. To the exterior grows an image of a fortress Europe that has difficulties in establishing a common policy and a coherent management of migratory flows⁵⁸.

This two-face policy nurtures misunderstandings. As a consequence, mobility in Europe is framed in between being a need and constraint to many and a great opportunity and free choice for few others. As well for the EU, mobility is both an opportunity and a challenge and only by trying to find a balanced solution to these trade-offs will it maximise its benefits towards an integrated single labour market.

Artists as a quantitatively few and qualified workforce are generally considered the least visible group of migrants and those who are neither unwelcome nor seen as a problem by the host societies. Nevertheless as they have lost their outsider status long ago (as described in Chapter 1 “Intricate Barriers and increasing circulation control”), they also see their mobility hindered by the same barriers, most especially those coming from outside the EU or not holding a EU passport. Yet these professionals too nurture aspirations to circulate and engage in collaborations across borders, notably with European counterparts. These prospects are heavily hindered by the above circulation restrictions and paradoxes.

⁵⁸ For innovative approaches to the challenges of migration in the 21st century see Jandl (2007), notably Veenkamp.

Emerging transnational trends

Migration has been an essential element in the livelihood strategies of poor as well better-off people. Spatial mobility is the result of individuals who move around the territory to satisfy their needs be tied to work or survival and nowadays as well to free time, leisure and consumption.

However the concept of migration has been traditionally used when it results in a more immediate and fundamental change, a relocation of the base of everyday activities when the access to places, environments, resources and people is completely altered.

Nowadays due to the impact of economic globalisation on employment worldwide, movements are overcoming previous colonial relations and bi-lateral character and are assuming new shapes. As territories are becoming places of transit where people come and go, for shorter terms in a temporary basis, the notion of mobility is being widely used instead that of migration (commonly associated to a more permanent type of move). The term transnational⁵⁹ mobility is also used at the interface between labour markets and migration research and some authors use it to refer to inner-European migration (Verwiebe, 2005).

Withol de Wenden (Allemand et al., 2004) talks about “pendular migrations with return ticket” aiming at improving living conditions at home. In Europe they occur mostly from east-west and south-north. The fall of the Berlin wall and the EU enlargement have facilitated this continuous mobility and the more frontiers are open, the more people circulate as an alternative to permanent settling.

Concerning current global mobility, this author along with others such as Sassen (Eade et al., 2004) and Montanari (2002) as well as the IOM (2010) refer to new types of movers, besides the traditional economic low skilled migrants and the political refugees

⁵⁹ Transnationalism focuses on cross-boundary political space. It transgresses the concept of sovereign territory, emphasizing instead the direct linkages across international boundaries, where at least one actor is non-state: Risse-Kappen, T. (1995) *Bringing Transnational Relations back In: non-state actors, domestic structures and national institutions*, Cambridge University Press; Tarrow, S. (2005) *The new transnational activism*, Cambridge University Press.

or asylum seekers: university students or highly qualified professionals⁶⁰, the majority move to or within the developed world, looking for higher salaries, more exciting social and cultural environments and also more freedom. Current globalisation process is characterized by an increase in trade in services and knowledge-based trade, both of which rely heavily on human resources thus these changes in the nature of the global labour demand and supply.

Even though diasporas keep on as a welcoming anchor, skilled workers and young professionals, do not rely so often on the same networks as the traditional ones (Farinha, 2011). They get information through the internet and professional and social connections.

While current EU movers no longer fit in the post World War II migrants' portrait – male, young, illiterate, from rural areas-, the diversification of migration projects and trajectories has not entirely offset the traditional model that keeps on as the bulk of migratory flows. But especially after the 90's on and within the EU the social composition of migrants has been slightly changing (Favell and Smith, 2006). Following close referred global trends, data shows also better educated, highly skilled labour migrants and they partly come with other motivations, such as to retire and to study. Quality of live and love or family reunion come out as well in the list of motivations side by side with economic reasons. Cross-national marriages and personal relationships stand out also as sources of free movement. There are mobility flows of retired people from north to south as well as movements of the highly skilled particularly between the different countries of northern and central Europe.

This recent trend in European retirement mobility is mainly due to lower cost of living, the attractiveness of the climate and of an idyllic rural way of life, and increased familiarity linked to the mass tourism boom. In what comes to student mobility, in latest years it has received support from national and EU⁶¹ institutions that have come to view it as a way to promote integration both culturally and economically by developing a

⁶⁰ In this group, we can find a growing number of women migrating on their own, that equalize the number of man that move, since they are getting more educated and qualified and freed from traditional family or partnership structures. Sassen (above quoted) calls them global women.

⁶¹ The most well known EU programmes promoting mobility of students and youngsters are Erasmus (for mobility within higher education) and most recently Youth on the Move.

European consciousness and training an educated mobile labour force within EU borders.

There is sharp awareness of opportunities of mobility for an ambitious generation of new Europeans (Recchi et al., 2003). Young people are moving to find work and adventure in global city hubs like Amsterdam, Brussels, London and Paris; professionals and corporate employees are taking up global placements. These movers as heavy users of EU provisions are said to be carriers of a new European identity feeling and of a cultural change.

Though the willingness of intra-EU migrants to move might not translate into a willingness to participate as prototypical European citizens, Recchi et al. (2006) affirm that these migrants have a more positive image of the EU, feel far more attached and perceive themselves as more knowledgeable about European institutions and policies than people who have not left their countries of origin. These authors argue that the “political dividends” of geographical mobility within the EU are clearer than the economic benefits⁶². Their study, however, alerts for the fact that such an outcome is much more likely when EU citizens on the move are at ease with different cultures and able to combine, not to transcend, home and host country lifestyles.

Researchers are also considered part of this group of “pioneers” of intra-European mobility. The EU has created the European Research Area (ERA), a unified space where researchers can move and interact freely and has been providing specific services and programmes⁶³ to foster the so-called 5th freedom, that of knowledge. From these instruments, “The European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers” (EC, 2005), adopted by the European Commission as a recommendation to members-states comes as a key document. Its main goal is to clarify profiles, roles, responsibilities and entitlements addressing researchers as well as employers in both public and private sectors. It provides a framework for career management and at the same time promotes open and transparent recruitment and appraisal procedures to ensure adequate working conditions for these professionals.

⁶² They claim “intra-European movers are experts in border crossing not class-crossing” though the impact of mobility to social and economic conditions remains to be clarified.

⁶³ Marie Curie actions for human resources and mobility; EURAXESS web portal providing information for researchers in motion.

As a matter of fact, artists, highly qualified professionals in the same way as researchers, are also included among the above “pioneers”. Actually the literature on researchers’ mobility⁶⁴ provides interesting insights, some of them transferable for the arts case, on drivers, conditions, obstacles and consequences of mobility in their careers’ development. Their professional profiles and working conditions, beyond engaging in experimental practices and creating knowledge and perspectives on the world (Conde, 1998), are indeed getting very much alike. However even though the EU is putting in place specific tools to promote artists mobility, these professionals would need a stronger uphold of their mobility, notably tackling their fragile social and working conditions and recognising its role within the freedom of movement of knowledge in the same way as for researchers.

⁶⁴ Gailard (1999); High Level Expert Group on Improving Mobility of Researchers (2004) *Final Report*, Brussels: European Commission; Eurostat (2007a); Idea Consult (Coord.) (2008) *Evidence of the Main Factors Inhibiting Mobility and Career Development of Researchers*, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications; Delicado (2010).

3. MOBILITY AS A POTENTIAL

Social theory moving on

In pre-modern times the whole of the society was structured around limited spaces such as social classes, towns or states and mobility was just the movement from one category to another. Therefore social life was predictable and manageable since these categories, as frames, encapsulated the quasi totality of existence conditions and prospects and determined the realistic life projects. On the other corner of society, nomads represented de-territorialisation and refusal to integrate. As citizenship went hand in hand with settlement, being stateless meant exclusion and raised fears and suspicions.

Technological developments in transports and communications provided considerable potential for speed and interactivity across borders. Along with the growing globalisation of economic markets and emergence of international political bodies have all been diminished distances and allowed for immediacy in the circulation of people, goods, ideas and information.

Though the arrival of modernity can be traced in many different aspects, many of them condensed into the idea of globalisation, one of its essential features⁶⁵ is the separation of space and time from living practice and from each other, becoming distinct and mutually independent categories of strategy and action. The extensive use of the new speed potentials and the proximity they permit has produced this time-space compression⁶⁶ which social and spatial consequences may put into question the very basis of society.

In this respect, some scholars propose mobility as key-concept within what they claim a much needed reorientation of social theory. They argue that social life is becoming more interdependent across borders and that social science concepts and methods have been ignoring the movement of people and information, whether material or virtual, limiting its analysis to fixed physical interactions, communities and places.

⁶⁵ Giddens (1992) has written extensively on the emergence and features of modernity.

⁶⁶ "Time-space compression" is a concept introduced by Harvey (1990).

According to Urry (Canzler et. al., 2008: 13):

Social sciences have overly focused upon ongoing geographically propinquitous communities based on face-to-face social interactions between those present.

Within the same perspective, Kaufmann (2002) alleges that:

Social structures and territories are being created around new aspects whose definitions are largely absent from the tool-boxes of researchers.

In their view of mainstream sociology, a large proportion of its conceptual and methodological apparatus is based on the model that all social groupings belong to clearly defined categories, as a feature of societies in pre-modern times. This model is criticised for being static (Beck, 2001; Urry, 2000) and based on a hypothetical unity between cultural identities, political action and economic power that no longer exists or never actually did.

A large spectrum of authors' enthusiasts of global cosmopolitanism⁶⁷, from Simmel⁶⁸ to Bauman (2000), Beck (2001 and 2007), Cohen (2005) and Held⁶⁹, among many others, have been announcing a new social order triggered by the spread of the use of new means of communication and information. For them technologies would emancipate individuals from conditionings imposed by categories such as territory, nation-state, community, social class or family. They talk about a new epoch, a golden age of cosmopolitan borderlessness that would offer huge new opportunities, especially to overcome the limitations and restrictions that societies and especially nation-states have exercised on the freedom of corporations and individuals to treat the world as their home.

⁶⁷ Referring to the ideal that the whole of humanity belongs to a single community. It may involve a sort of world government or convey more inclusive moral, economic, and/or political relationships between nations or individuals.

⁶⁸ Simmel developed the idea of cosmopolitanism within the concept of *urban culture* in "The Metropolis and Mental Life", 1903.

⁶⁹ "Democracy and the Global Order: From the Modern State to Cosmopolitan Governance", 1995, London: Polity Press; and with Daniele Archibugi (Eds.), "Cosmopolitan Democracy: An Agenda for a New Social Order", 1995, London: Polity Press.

Nowadays cosmopolitanism, as a result of globalisation and international migrations, has been praised as the enlargement of personal, social and cultural agendas (Cohen, 2005). As a management process of cultural and political multiplicities, it overcomes the nation-state by connecting the local to the global and creating an environment where citizens are able to share and combine diverse filiations and interests.

Several writers when trying to describe what this possible “new social order” would be use metaphors and theories of fluidity, liquidity, fluxes and nomadism (Bauman, 2000; Castells, 2000; Cresswell, 2006; Deleuze and Guattari⁷⁰, Derrida⁷¹, Urry, 2000 and 2007) since they consider that it is fundamentally heterogeneous, ambivalent and reversible. This social fluidity as well as cosmopolitanism hark back to the dream of a classless society and convey advancements in social justice and equal opportunities.

However, some of these theoretical strands might be denounced as technical determinism by not considering properly the different usages, appropriation and impacts of technological tools and expanded exchange of goods, information and mobility of people. In fact they often confuse mobility and potential for movement, by little examining the complex social processes that underlie and orchestrate its uses. As a matter of fact scientific research on this issue remained very vague and theoretical in the past, as general observations on cosmopolitanism, lacking a necessary confrontation between theory and empirical evidence to validate their celebrated structural societal changes (Delanty in Onghena, 2008).

Favell (2008) argues that global theorists never penetrate further than macro-level political economy and have been guilty of excess claiming that global migration and mobility have dissolved the stable structures of the nation-state-society⁷². He exemplifies:

The decline of the nation-state is almost never checked against the basic everyday durability of nationally specific practices and identities in organising daily live and work prospects of people in Europe.

⁷⁰ Deleuze, G.; Guattari, F. (1986) *Nomadology*, New York: Semiotext(e).

⁷¹ Derrida, J. (2001) *Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness*, London: Routledge.

⁷² In Chapter 4 “Exploring the qualitative dimension of EU mobility: choice of paradigm” this author is quoted to claim for studies of a more micro-level and para-legal nature.

Kaufmann (2002) insists on the absence of dialectical linking between theory and empirical research. In his mind it is not certain whether spatial mobility in general is increasing (as there is a lack of regular datasets to evaluate the actual dimension and development of intra-European mobility: Chapter 4 “Searching mobility across national borders”). More than growth, he defends that we are dealing with substitution phenomena between forms of mobility and circulation.

On top these theories establish a parallel between fluidity in space-time and social fluidity, though these are two orders of reality that do not necessarily go together. Movement in geographical space can also be seen as a constraint and not a widening of possibilities to move in social space (debated for the case of the EU in Chapter 2 “Emerging transnational trends”). The potential growth of fluxes does not necessarily lead to fluidification and a disappearance of territories, but might even reinforce them. As it is the case for low skilled labour migrants coming from developing countries into Europe whose constrained and limited mobility is a question of survival. Mobility’ new chances might bring the reinforcement of big centres to the detriment of rural areas, the rift between countries of the north and the ones of the south and the persistence of inequalities of gender and race.

As a result, talking about social fluidification might refer, at best, to a small section of the population and to varied degrees of freedom. Contemporary societies might well contain elements of both periods and paradigms. So changes may not (yet?) be so radical. On one side, individuals are not necessarily more mobile because they have possibilities of travelling faster and cheaper. Mobility does not necessarily increase just because there is a greater potential for mobility. Communications and technological systems also don’t automatically free people from social constraints.

So questions remain such as if and in which ways time-space compression expands the room for manoeuvre that each individual has available in its life course and choices. Is the rapidity procured by new transport and communication systems significant enough to allow an increase in the margins of the individual in constructing its own social meanings and networks?

Empirical research up until now cannot confirm or deny such statements. Nevertheless one has got to have in consideration how and by whom these technologies get to be appropriated and the degree of freedom afforded by its usage.

Thus various authors⁷³ propose mobility as a core concept of a newly emergent paradigm in social theory. They suggest that movement (actual, potential or blocked) should be grounded in economic, social and political relations and contexts. This theoretical stream is analysing how mobility comes along a system of constraints and how its right to use might be imposed and conditioned. For them mobility does not consist exclusively of movement, but also of a system of potentials characterised by intentions, strategies and choices. And being mobile is not only a question of geographical space but essentially of a social one.

Urry in his manifesto *Sociology Beyond Societies* (2000) proposes to get rid of the very concept of society and replace it by an approach based on movement. Societies, whether corresponding to state borders or not, are no longer a presupposition but a result. This author (Urry, 2007: 6) speaks about a *mobility turn* that he describes as:

A different way of thinking through the character of economic, social and political relationships.

This new paradigm is in his voice spreading in social sciences and changing analyses that have been static, fixed and concerned with a-spatial social structures. It connects the analysis of different forms of travel and communications with the multiple ways in which economic and social life is performed and organised through time and across different spaces. Dealing with the social aspects from the angle of potentialities demands a new conceptual apparatus which is still absent.

This new paradigm has been connecting and developing with contributions from different disciplines such as tourism, transport, geography, sociology, communications and media studies, political sciences, migration studies, thus generating a kind of interdisciplinary “turn”.

⁷³ Canzler; Kaufmann; Kesselring (2008); Cresswell (2006); Urry (2000 and 2007).

Methodologically it calls for a new approach that goes beyond “the nationalistic paradigm” (Beck, 2000) and is able to identify the mobility phenomena. Social science needs to look over administrative borders, to compare data from different countries and even research on networks and behaviours that do not follow the national logic.

This approach feeds into the current analysis of the mobility of performing artists in the EU as an empirical case to study and question mobility. The performing arts open and diverse character and their cross border practices allow precisely to put into cause the national logics and limited fixed categories denounced by these authors as well as to relate it to larger economical, social and political frameworks.

Resource for the resourceful

Over the years social scientists have been debating how nowadays mobilities have been reconstituting social life in uneven and complex ways. Despite recognising increased opportunities for mobility, different theoretical strands as “elite” and “social capital” theories advocate for the reproduction of social structures and consequently of social inequalities denying the claims of a new social order.

The elite theory, since Wright Mills⁷⁴ to nowadays analyses of Guiraudon (2000) and Dezalay with Garth (2006) on the European integration process, has been affirming the transposition and the spread of established powers in the national to the international arena and portraying the new European elites. Cosmopolitanism is criticised for being an option that only privileged elites can access and referring to all those with resources – financial, educational or family wise - to travel, to learn languages and to absorb other cultures.

Some global Marxists have identified a transnational capitalist class running business corporations, flying around the globe and manipulating international organisations like the EU to their own ends (Favell, 2008).

⁷⁴*The Power Elite* (1956) describes the relationship between the political, military, and economic elite in the USA, noting that these people share a common world view.

Cohen (2005) argues that in nowadays world, cultural and linguistic diversity are omnipresent and the capacity to communicate and understand other cultures is available potentially to many. For this author globalisation and mass migration have made cosmopolitanism a question of survival, thus he talks about a new daily or functional cosmopolitanism. Favell (2006) also upholds that within current European mobility (Chapter 2 “Emerging transnational trends”), behind the image of global elites lie other socially differentiated realities. In fact, the skilled and educated among the globally mobile also include: students, mid-level technical and clerical workers, upwardly middle-classes and migrants from a range of intermediate developing states and many more hard to describe as elites. Not to mention the highly qualified migrants that end up in low skilled jobs and count as unskilled workforce in statistics. In his view the dichotomy highly skilled elites versus unqualified labour migrants or asylum seekers is too simplistic to describe current migrant flows.

As the classical elite theories seem not to be able to conveniently explain current complex mobilities, in another perspective, the use of the concept of social capital has been observing how access to mobility is differentiated and expands previous distinct conditions at territorial, political, economical, social and cultural level. This theoretical line was developed initially by, amongst others, Bourdieu (1980), Coleman⁷⁵ and Putnam⁷⁶.

Bourdieu extended the idea of capital to categories such as social, cultural and symbolic, referring to prestige, qualifications or financial resources. In his theory each individual occupies a position in a multidimensional social space, being defined by the amounts of each kind of capital it possesses. Social capital can be roughly defined as the resources resulting from the position of individuals in a certain structure of social connections. The concept of capital includes the value of social networks, which Bourdieu showed could be used to produce or reproduce inequality. As it is the case for highly qualified migration, the added value and role of previous diasporas and nowadays formal and informal networks and connections is to provide access to social capital essential to overcome mobility's obstacles and smooth its risks and costs.

⁷⁵ *Foundations of Social Theory* (1990) defines social capital functionally as anything that facilitates individual or collective action, generated by networks of relationships, reciprocity, trust, and social norms.

⁷⁶ *Bowling Alone* (2000) refers to social capital as the level of networking and civil interaction.

According to social capital's viewpoint, the way individuals lead one's life depends on personal backgrounds but as well on the opportunities and multiple influences that emerge from one's social context. Thus mobility might bring a broadening of life choices but its access and appropriation is constrained.

Mobility as a social capital and a resource (meaning a source of wealth and value, as Lautier and Lévy have expressed in Bonnet and Desjeux, 2000) might lead to new behaviours but also reflects and reproduces previous social and spatial inequalities along with its own intrinsic ones. Access to different possibilities of mobility and the way they are used by individuals become potentially important factors of differentiation and social distinction thus mobility turns into a vector of social status.

Hence mobility operates as a resource of the already resourceful, concerning the social categories that have access and capacity to cope with its specific requirements. Therefore when referring to an elite, in this context, it does not relate exclusively to the economically better off, but to the holders of certain forms of capital (in the sense as Bourdieu uses this term) that are particular to mobility processes. Analyses of European higher education mobility have highlighted that participants are coming mostly from privileged social and educational groups (ECOTEC, 2006). In the same line, studies⁷⁷ concentrating in the arts field have also shown that artists come in general from family backgrounds holding cultural, social and economical capitals that can support the unpredictability of their income and the risk of their mobility experiences. Thus social categories play an important selective role.

In this respect, social fluidification as the result of free movement may affect at best a minority, those with agency⁷⁸ capable of taking advantage of the new means available. Lévy (Bonnet and Desjeux, 2000) has put it in a simple straight way:

Mobility is a capital that allows individuals to better deploy their strategies in the structure of society.

⁷⁷ RANDES, Melisa (2003) *From Exclusion to Opportunity. Inclusion and International Mobility in Higher Arts Education*, Utrecht: Utrecht School of the Arts (HKU). In Chapter 2 "Unaccomplished single market" more literature on this issue is discussed.

⁷⁸ The influence of structure and agency on human thought and behaviour has been debated by many authors, notably Bourdieu (1979) and Giddens (*The Constitution of Society*, 1984, Cambridge: Polity). "Agency" refers to the capacity of individuals to act independently and to make their own free choices.

So mobility, seen as a resource, seems to enclose a huge potentiality for change by self-generating more mobility that in turn opens access to other resources. In contemporary societies both paradigms coexist: along with the reproduction of former social structures and its consequent disparities there is space for the emergence of new territories of freedom. As reality is social constructed it all depends on how society is envisaged and put into perspective. Bearing in mind that social phenomena as mobility depend on processes of social practice and interaction, may clarify what conditions its accessibility and consequently be in a position to make it a more informed choice.

From right to competence

Mobility is an extremely general and transversal notion, most of the times just linked to movement of people and objects in virtual or real space and time. Yet beyond movement, mobility also consists of a system of potentials. This research approaches the concept of mobility in terms of potential and accessibility highlighting its *modus operandi* at the interdependence of social structures and personal features.

The following Image n.1 allows visualising the dimensions of mobility at institutional and individual level (after Lévy in Bonnet and Desjeux, 2000 and Kaufman, 2002):

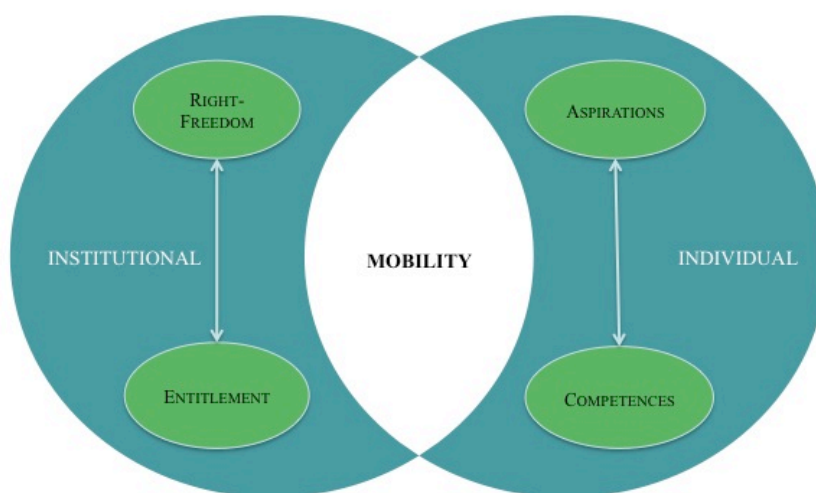


Image n.1 – Mobility dimensions: individual and institutional levels

Further developing from the idea of mobility as a resource and social capital, Urry (2007) argues that moving between places can be a source of status and power, an expression of the rights to movement. Those who do not have access to mobility endure from diverse handicaps whether social, cultural, economic, psychological or physical.

On a societal or institutional perspective, freedom to move has become essential to access goods and services but also social relations, education and work opportunities. So mobility built-up into being considered, in some societies, as in the case of the EU, a basic right of citizens: whether inside a city, throughout a country or internationally. Freedom of circulation brings along, therefore, the counter right of having access to effective institutional means to actually move: infra-structural but as well as legal and educational. This right-freedom that allows individuals to move is in fact a pre-condition to be able to go forward with personal choices in different domains. Thus it corresponds simultaneously to a second derived right-entitlement that enforces governments to provide frameworks and remove obstacles that would allow mobility in the first place – as illustrated by the institutional level on Image n.1.

The right to move has become vital in current societies characterised by an extreme division of labour, diversity of offer and demand, multiplicity of activities and extension of territories across borders and towards virtual reality. In this respect it developed into a general right many allege as universal, from which precede other rights. The concept of right-entitlement, used by Ascher (Allemand et al., 2004), refers to the right to dispose of effective means, material and cultural to move, implying the responsibility of the whole society.

However mobility is not simply a consequence of economic labour markets or political aims and funds, but also an expression of individual motivations and interests. As in the case of the arts field, it may convey a political and economic agenda that is articulated with an artistic project.

Currently mobility is being rephrased in terms of equity and social justice and discussions focus on what a proper minimum guarantee level of mobility would be like and how a society would be able to assure it democratically. Cresswell and Withol de Wenden (above quoted) associate the concept of citizenship to that of mobility. The

later defends that migrants become subject of international law in the name of universal principles and that diversity of movements leads to a plurality of new citizenships. In her opinion migrants are becoming important political actors by re-creating new forms of citizenship.

In the same way as Favell (2008) revealed how socially diverse actual global elites are, Cresswell reminds that the kinetic elites need to be surrounded by kinetic proletarians whose mobility is forced. Thus making access to mobility more democratic would mean making it an informed choice instead of an obligation or a matter of survival. Though the distinction between a need and a choice in the territory of mobility is quite complex even a rhetoric debate.

Nevertheless, as it stands today, for the most part of societies around the globe many restrictions to mobility of people, goods and information remain even within the EU. Nowadays environmental concerns are also questioning the impact of mobility and how sustainability can be envisaged (for the performing arts sector see: Julie's Bicycle, 2011). But the definition of these limits should incorporate equal opportunities and fairness criteria. Of course, the right to move presumes the right to stay still. Most especially nowadays as new means of communications allow social interactions without leaving one's home. There are some interesting arguments on the value of immobility and the fact that borders still matter (Hammar et al., 1997) because a mobility rate in itself may not tell much. It is important to explore if it enhances the innovative capabilities and conditions of the ones that have chosen to move and then, as a consequence, the rest of the society as a whole (and not only the host). If mobility keeps on as part of human character, thus a right of citizens, policies should be supportive and possibilities should be explored to enhance its positive effects.

In what comes to the individual dimension of mobility, illustrated as well in Image n.1 above, several authors⁷⁹ have been developing a concept that concentrates on its *modus operandi* thus on the intentions and plans of those involved, as well as their motivations and their possible realm of action.

⁷⁹ Bonnet and Desjeux and Lévy (Bonnet and Desjeux, 2000); Carling (Montanari, 2002); Kaufmann (2002); Ascher (Allemand et al., 2004).

According to this vision, many people may have a pronounced wish to move but find themselves unable to overcome the obstacles. Hence it is important to distinguish between *aspiration* (the wish and intention to move) and *ability* (the capacity of realisation of this wish).

Aspirations relate to how people want to be in the future, for which reasons people use their capabilities (Petroff-Bartholdi in Boudon et al., 1990). It refers to the process by which an individual or social group is attracted to a goal and sets itself tasks. Aspirations might be understood when locating the individuals that express them in their social structures, culture, and the historic moment they live in. So the institutional and individual levels are mutually interdependent. Each individual, translating structural constraints and social representations, chooses its aims, calculating costs, advantages and risks associated. Aspirations act like drivers for mobility. But in order to develop aspirations to plan international careers one needs to possess certain specific abilities in order to go ahead. Therefore abilities may also empower and inspire expectations, plans and projects and consequently its realisation. So aspirations and abilities are also mutually reliant.

The notion of abilities is vast and refers to aptitude, physical and mental, whether innate, acquired and learnt. It includes formal and informal qualifications and skills. In this research abilities are tackled through the concept of competences (Lévy in Bonnet and Desjeux, 2000) that joins qualifications and skills together at the level of application or use. Parente (2008) defines competence precisely as a set of know-how “in use”. Competence is a proven and demonstrated ability to perform a specific task, role, action or function, encompassing a combination of knowledge, skills and behaviours applied in an usual and/or changing situation (Fisher and Karpodini-Dimitriadi, 2007 and CEDEFOP, 2008). It includes several aspects such as: cognitive (involving use of theory and concepts); functional (including skills and know-how); personal (involving knowing how to conduct oneself in a specific situation) and ethical (referring to the possession of certain values).

Following Parente (above quoted) competence can be scrutinised in three main transversal types: technical, strategic and relational. Technical competences are defined as knowledge and skills to perform coherent and distinct work actions within a certain

discipline area. Within the arts field technical competences are commonly referred as artistic, because traditionally there was a distinction between artistic competences (that of a creator or interpreter) and technical (that of a sound or set designer). However the theoretical concept of technical competences groups spans both.

Strategic competences refer to the degree of control that workers have over their work actions, to the quality of the execution, to the responsibility, autonomy and initiative present in their decisions and actions. Pro-activity, prospective and entrepreneurial attitudes, including risk taking, are central to this concept (Hagoort, 2004 and HKU, 2010). All activities concerning management, planning, and coordination are included.

Finally, relational competences refer to communicational aspects, interactivity, and all actions that connect to other participants in the working processes as well as its relations towards the rest of the society. They comprise capacity of expressing orally and in written, foreign languages command, ability to dialogue, establishing contacts and networking and other social skills.

At political level, the European Reference Framework (EC, 2007a) is proposing a typology that includes a diversified set of eight key competences that actually correspond to the above described strategic and relational types: communication in mother tongue; communication in foreign languages; mathematical competences and basic competences in science and technology; digital competence; learning to learn; social and civic competences; sense of initiative and entrepreneurship; cultural awareness and expression (most of these competences will be analysed onto performing artists' mobility practices in Chapter 6 "Learning the hard way"; see also Chapter 4 "Linking causes, conditions and consequences: analysis model").

Concluding, every individual has its own potential for mobility that can be transformed into movement according to aspirations and competences. So mobility is seen as the way each individual appropriates the field of possible action in the sphere of mobility and uses it to develop personal projects. Their aspirations and competences to actually

move depends on specific requirements – individual and institutional-, risks and costs associated to its particular case⁸⁰.

Performing artists, as qualified professionals and often coming from family backgrounds holding cultural, social and economical capitals are apparently in possession of the adequate resources to be engage in mobility. However, the analysis of competences showed that technical-artistic competences might not be enough. How acquainted are performing artists with strategic and relational type of competences? What challenges at the competence level does mobility bring to performing arts practices and profiles at European level?

⁸⁰ Withol de Wenden (Allemand et al., 2004) referring to the case of migrants argues that their mobility incorporates a part of culture, competence and a project.

4. STAGING THE RESEARCH JOURNEY: METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Exploring the qualitative dimension of EU mobility: choice of paradigm

Mobility in the EU, and most particularly that of performing artists, is quite an unknown territory despite the current interest mobility is rising, notably among the media, policy makers and academics. The literature review of the former chapters has showed a wide and multi-layered research domain confronted with many questionings and gaps.

It is a very transversal phenomenon that touches upon different academic disciplines and areas of expertise such as migrations, work and labour markets, the EU integration process (put forward as a sociological discipline of its own in Favell and Guiraudon, 2011) and the arts field itself making research processes intricate and complex. Then mobility in the EU free movement zone is transnational thus challenge research paradigms and methodologies commonly used to deal with stable societies organised in nation-states. Plus, artists as highly skilled professionals question concepts and practices of traditional labour migration.

What is at stake when studying mobility of performing artists in the EU? Besides the need to overcome the absence of quantitative datasets, on the other side, there is a need to invest on the study of qualitative dimensions of mobility so to grasp the phenomena as whole and in its transversal features. Moreover, this study object requires broader concepts and a supra-national perspective and research agenda that is European-driven thus able to read “in between the lines”, i.e., “in between the countries”.

Firstly, the research on the mobility of artists at the EU level has been hampered by the lack of reliable and comparable datasets to serve as a basis to its questionings and analysis. The lack of figures regarding directions, intensity and regularity of movements at national and EU level deprives analysis from a grounded starting point. It is actually a wider deficiency that goes beyond mobility and relates to the whole arts field in all its dimensions.

Yet on the qualitative side, in the same way, still little is in fact known about the causes, conditions and consequences of mobility on a more subjective and experiential level. Favell's (Favell and Smith, 2006: 3) view is that academically speaking there has been relatively little "human level" research on the diverse, yet prototypical avatars of globalisation in the skilled, educated or professional categories. The author calls for more micro-level studies on the everyday reality of global mobility, despite the avalanche of writings on globalisation on all its forms. Actually, beyond legal and administrative frameworks, cultural and educational integration may be the main challenge of mobility in a Europe of diverse nations and languages, but this is surprisingly little studied.

There is an "empirical lacunae" and disconnection of approaches in current global and migration studies. On one hand, macro level theories on cosmopolitanism and global societies stand, reifying new digital communication tools and transnational actors resistance and freedom in its conceptualisation of agency (Bauman, 2000; Beck, 2001; Castells, 2000; Sassen, 1990 and 2000, and others), even trying to sought to dissolve the concept of "society" (Urry, 2000). On the other, there are highly structural, institutional and quantitative analysis of the politics of (im)migration that search for relations of cause-effect of legal frameworks and economic trends imposed to individuals.

Authors like Favell (quoted above) as well as Delanty (in Onghena, 2008: 223; discussed in Chapter 3 "Social theory moving on") and Guirardon (Favell and Guirardon, 2011) call for cross-reference these distinct contributions as well as investment on micro level "interpretative work" about meanings and contexts of specific actors, individuals or groups, so to acknowledge the real consequences of macro structures on their daily lives.

In view of the state of the art of the study of mobility and its many gaps, this research assumes an exploratory design opting to invest on a qualitative type of analysis associated to a grounded theory strategy. This choice allows exploring this transversal issue in a wide-ranging way in search for specific questions but also aiming at opening doors for future research. The focus is therefore on discovery, on gaining new insights and familiarity. Getting to know what is at stake when mobility decisions are considered and when mobility is experienced is meant to allow pointing out linkages and

transversal characteristics. As a matter of fact, the final intention of this research is to grasp common features and possibly draw general trends across borders that may give hints for future detailed exploration and assessment.

The grounded theory⁸¹ model feeds into the exploratory intentions and complex multidimensional features of this research object. It proposes a dynamic cyclical process (also named as inductive-deductive) between theory and data as it is based on the systemic generation of theory from data while in parallel theories also inform data collection (Glaser, 2002). Moreover it is also consonant with the qualitative postulate (the grounded theory will be discussed further on in this chapter when the empirical strategy is described).

The choice for a qualitative method - also known as interpretative - is due to the importance given in this research to the meaning conferred by individuals under study to their own actions (Lessart-Hébert et al., 1994: 39). This facet is especially significant as it is an analysis into performing artists' actions within work contexts across-borders in which the symbolic and personal dimensions are central. In order to analyse mobility causes, conditions and consequences there is a need to take into account meanings and representations that events assume for individuals involved so to have access to the internal dynamics of situations (Erickson, 1986). Bearing in mind that meanings are formed through and in the course of the events themselves, there is the need to consider multiple testimonies of those implied in the reality under study.

This approach is inscribed into the background paradigm shaping this research that individuals construct reality, namely constructivism⁸² and within, most specifically, the theoretical stream interactionism. According to the constructivist perspective, individuals act within an environment that is structured by the social that contributes, in turn, to shaping the structures of this very environment. So there is dialectic between

⁸¹ Research method developed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (1967), considered reverse to traditional research processes, because its first step is data collection and only then assumptions and theory construction takes place. See: GLASSER, B. and STRAUSS, A. (1967) *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*, Chicago: Aldine Publishing.

⁸² Constructivism became prominent with Berger and Luckmann's work from 1966, *The Social Construction of Reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge*, Cambridge: Anchor. For the application of social constructivism to international relations and the European integration process, see: CHRISTIANSEN, T.; JORGENSEN, K.; WIENER, A. (Eds.) (2001) *The Social Construction of Europe*, Sage: London.

social structures and agency⁸³, as society forms the individuals who create society. The environment or social norms that emerge in this context have an impact on individual's interest development, expectations and subsequently actions. Berger and Luckmann's (1966) argue that all knowledge, including common sense knowledge of everyday reality, is derived from and maintained by social interactions.

This aspect feeds into the interactionism stream, rooted also in Berger and Luckmann work (above quoted) that derives social processes and meanings from human interactions, as people act toward things based on the meaning those things have for them (Foddy, 1993). In other words, when people interact, they do so with the understanding that their respective perceptions of reality are related, and as they act upon this understanding their common knowledge of reality becomes reinforced and comes to be presented as part of an objective reality. It is in this sense that it can be said that reality is socially constructed.

Moreover, it is crucial to situate this research regarding the sociological debate on the relation between structure and agency, already inherent to Favell's criticism above described on the state of art of research on migrations and global societies that tend to unilaterally give primacy to either structures or individuals. This research opts for a more integrated approach that considers both angles, within a more dialectical view that feeds into Berger and Luckmann approach quoted above, and takes into account authors such as Giddens and Bourdieu. Inspired in Giddens (1984) structuration theory that combines both dimensions, beyond meanings given by individuals to their practices, this research also considers the influence of social structures such as economical, political and professional frameworks onto individual's actions. On its turn, Bourdieu (1980a) in his theory of practice has condensed this dichotomy into the concept of habitus. In his view individual practices incorporate social structures, i.e. the agent internalises relationships and expectations according to his/her position and role in the field it relates to. Bourdieu's vision, more structuralist, though embedding social structures in individual behaviour, reveals the system reproduction and imposing mechanisms.

⁸³ Agency refers to the capacity of individuals to act independently and to make their own free choices.

These macro theoretical and methodological options will be further explained and related to this concrete research study object ahead in this Chapter in “Linking causes, conditions and consequences: analysis model” and “Encountering performing artists around in the EU: empirical strategy” when the model of analysis and the techniques used to collect data will be considered. Yet firstly beforehand the research object, questions and concepts will be discussed in relation to methodological concerns and choices.

Grasping a research object “on the move”: research questions, concepts and obstacles

The starting point of this research (see “Introduction: performing artists as a case to look beyond legal obstacles to mobility”) connects very primarily to the question of the EU as an enlarged space for (performing) artists regarding their working and social conditions. In the EU, despite the single market project, labour markets remain mainly nationally organised and regulated thus many differences persist, most particularly in what comes to social status of this particular professional activity. As discussed in Chapter 1 “Fragile social position at home and abroad”, the EU territory configures disparate working means and conditions drawing an unbalanced mobility scenario where various causes intersect and overlap. So this research was triggered by the willingness to the diverse causes, conditions and consequences of the mobility of performing artists throughout the EU space, seen as an enlarged labour market.

Why performing artists? May the artistic profession contribute to shed light on overall geographical and job mobility phenomena? Looking at previous research and literature (see again Chapter 1 “Fragile social position at home and abroad”), artistic activities are intrinsically associated to mobility: history wise and due to the low regulation at national level that designs a flexible professional profile. However, the same literature also portrays the other side of this flexibility i.e. their fragile social status, ill adapted to their working practices and logics.

At the same time, when taking a look at the background, the intensification of global economic markets, the development of digital communication technologies and the

development of transnational political projects, very notably the EU, configure a supposing favourable scenario to promote mobility expectations and practices.

However, statistics reveal that intra-EU mobility is low despite the right to free movement granted to EU citizens: only to 4% live or work in a member-state different from their original one (EUROFOUND, 2007; EC, 2010b). Why is mobility accessible and/or appealing to only a few? EU studies and analysis assume a list of legal-administrative obstacles that hinder circulation across borders, most specially within policy areas that are national responsibility such as taxation, social security, recognition of qualifications, visas and work permits. Moreover these reports also refer to language as an essential obstacle. The fact is that coordination at EU level in these above referred areas is minute and working in between different national labour markets reveals to be complex and costly.

Then what about artists' mobility? Aren't they supposed to be freer from legal-administrative barriers as a less regulated professional activity? What can play in as obstacles to mobility, beyond these reported official barriers?

Exploratory interviews as well as the further study of existing literature in the different topics this multidisciplinary object convenes - from the sociology of arts, culture, professionals as well as EU, migrations and mobility - have pointed out the importance of analysing mobility as a potential that results from the relation between specific institutional and individual frameworks. Authors like Urry (2000 and 2007), Kaufmann (2002) and Cresswell (2006) have described how social structures and individual choices interact to set the conditions for accessing and engaging in mobility (Chapter 3 "From right to competence"). In this framework of analysis, mobility is defined as a right-freedom and entitlement at institutional level whereas composed by aspirations and competences at individual level. As a consequence, the central questions that inform this research that intends to shed light on causes, conditions and consequences of the mobility of performing artists in the EU are:

- What are the aspirations and competences for the mobility of performing artists?

- What consequences is mobility provoking into performing artists' working practices and profiles at individual and community/institutional level?

In order to precise the research object that the above set of questions configures, it is crucial to go through its multi-layered features and the consequent essential challenges it raises towards sociological research. What is at stake when crossing mobility and arts within a single research object? How to grasp and conceptualise this volatile research object?

Recognising (performing) artists as professionals across borders

Sociology has been contributing to shedding light on the social logic's present in the functioning of the arts, concentrating on the relations between artists (as individuals) and social structures. Bourdieu (1992) theories have shown the functioning of the arts field, despite its own specific autonomy, as the result of the articulation of other dimensions like economy and politics. Also Becker (1982) with his concept of "art worlds" has presented a model of social organisation in the arts and elaborated the processes through which collective artistic activity is transacted and resources distributed. Sociological research of the relations between art, institutions and the market has contributed to demystify the romantic image of the artist, which creates obstacles to the understanding of the work and the situation of contemporary artists.

If from one side the sociology of the arts is known for having brought the human dimension to the arts field, situating art works and artists in the contexts and societies that have produced them, on the other side, it is also criticised for trying to standardise and for having taken the extraordinary out of the processes of artistic creation/production.

Research on social and professional conditions, practices and representations of artists, notably of performing artists, show regularities but also many contradictions and ambivalence (Farinha, 2003a; Menger, 2002 and 2009; Capiáu, Wiesand and ERICARTS, 2006). Side by side with feelings of passion, communication, interaction and expression there are contexts of crisis, doubt, dependency and precariousness. At

the same time that artists claim transdisciplinarity, flexibility, freedom and mobility they fear instability and irregularity. They complain about holding multiple jobs but they are afraid of the routine of a full time position. Even though they have invested in their careers since a very young age, they can't avoid unpredictability. They live between the definition of a singularity and melting in a collective. It is precisely in the relation between social structures - including political and economical, but also professional -, and the individual strategies of artists, with more or less a degree of autonomy, that this research intends to lay.

Yet when approaching the study of art as a professional activity and artists as professionals, one finds a gap between arts and statistics that goes back to the original question on "what is art?". The lack of regulation and concrete definition of the sector nationally and across borders has been making it difficult for statistic tools to get hold of this field. This openness is necessary for the sake of freedom of expression and creation. But on the other side it has been keeping the sector as an outsider from many academic, social and political frameworks. Would it be possible to map, assess and quantify cultural records and trends (at the EU level) without enclosing its dynamism? How to proceed?

For key players such as the EUROSTAT⁸⁴ the definition of a field for investigation took much debate due to the wide differences in national interpretations of the word "culture" itself⁸⁵. This hurdle intensifies when trying to agree on a definition for art and artists. How can one answer the question "who is an artist" without making the value judgement of "what is an artist" and ending up in a discussion about what is art? There seems not to be any aesthetic neutrality in the definition of the artist⁸⁶ even though social scientists are expected not to evaluate or rank artists in aesthetic terms.

⁸⁴ Only from 2007 on the EUROSTAT has started to publish regular datasets on cultural issues with a chapter on cultural employment (EUROSTAT, 2007 and 2011). In 2008 a specific OMC group of member-states representatives was constituted to debate the setting up of a service of regular collection and analysis of cultural data and trends at European level.

⁸⁵ Delineation and structure of the culture field adopted is based on the notion of "domains", including: artistic and monumental heritage; archives; libraries; book and press; visual arts; architecture; performing arts; audio and audiovisual media/multimedia.

⁸⁶ The 1980 UNESCO General Assembly in Belgrade issued a recommendation concerning the status of the artists and proposed a very broad and favourable definition of an artist that aimed mostly to safeguard their freedom (artistic, but also economic) to act and create: http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13138&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html#MONITORING (accessed in March 2012).

All the criteria used to label some activities as professions, become manifestly imprecise when it comes to arts. The artistic sector is tricky to define and identify, where only the obvious and more formal employment is counted in official statistics. Nevertheless the arts are accepted as productive activities with a social function and role that is distinct from leisure. So it is possible to set a group of criteria in relation with the concept of profession that permits to approach and view arts as such. Yet categories used to define a profession⁸⁷ are not able to define precise borders in what comes to the artistic field due to its atypical features. Here resides the imprecise character of the arts (Paredeise, 1998), the artistic professional identity and recognition doesn't come literally from these criteria. Nowadays this question has even been complicated by transdisciplinary practices, use of ICT, fall of frontiers and contamination between art forms and claim for artistic status in professions previously considered technical.

In what comes to the performing arts field in particular, studies need to broaden the definition of this sector getting away from a hierarchical and unilateral focus on the artist and including other professionals profiles involved in the artistic process, besides creators and technicians (that might be nowadays considered creators/authors), also managers, producers, students, scholars, experts and policy makers (see Chapter 1 Open, diverse and prototypal character"). Contemporary art processes are becoming less hierarchical and more collaborative and the artistic status and authorship turns to be shared among most of the participants. Secondly, the increasingly transdisciplinary and intercultural practices across borders are blurring the sector definition and renewing it. Thus it is important to assess these changes in terms of practices and profiles in light of these professionals' mobility and participation in European labour markets.

Therefore in the context of this research, the unity of analysis is the individual professional involved in the making of live performances and who takes up/claims an artistic status. Portfolio careers, including multiple job holding and being polyvalent are common features in the performing arts sector as professionals tend to assume often simultaneously various roles and tasks: creators, interpreters, managers, directors, producers, teachers or trainers even sound, costume or light designers. Consequently this research focus and refers to artists even though also taking into account

⁸⁷ Time and place of work; income; diplomas and qualifications; participation in professional organisations; integration in networks; peer recognition.

perspectives from different occupational profiles within the performing arts sector. Mobility is taken as an aspiration and practice of the whole sector not of creators or interpreters (those commonly named as artists) solely.

In what comes to disciplines, at present the interest in setting a typology of forms and a clear separation of the various types of performances is reduced. The eminent mobile and changeable aspect of different artistic processes and outputs, based on new circumstances, technologies and goals make it ineffective to come up with a canonical fixed definition of the genre or discipline. As a consequence, this research does not distinguish among contemporary genres and sub-genres. It spans professionals from various disciplines within the performing arts - having dance, music and theatre as the main references - as well as all those working in between genres. However, it mostly focuses on professionals working within contemporary prototypical goals and processes. On one side, being a territory of experimentation, mobility is considered crucial at various dimensions - material and artistic -, to these professionals and their micro-small scale initiatives. Moreover, precisely for this prototypical character, professionals involved have a potentially more fragile social condition. Thus it is an interesting population to question and discuss aspirations, competences and consequences of mobility and to understand the relation between institutional frameworks and individual conditions.

When going from the national to the European level, the issue of defining (performing) artists as professionals increases in complexity. National classifications of activities and occupations are not directly comparable across borders. It is even more intricate to locate and compare cultural employment data spanning a variety of formal and informal status. Cultural occupations are also to be found in other sectors. Plus the performing arts intrinsic diversity and dynamism of production, creation methods and organisation, most of times functioning in a project basis, makes it extremely tricky to compare data, trends and figures at the international level (see Chapter 1 “Open, diverse and prototypical character” and “Fragile social condition at home and abroad”).

Moreover supportive policies for the arts are generally laid down by national or regional governments and are subject to disparate criteria. Eliot Freidson (1986) argued that artistic professions are a challenge for the study of work and professions due to the

diversity of national policies that consequently generate huge differences in the structure of the careers in the labour market but also in defining their social status. Transposing to the European stage, taking into account the review of the literature (see Chapter 1 “Fragile social position at home and abroad”), one comes across a huge discrepancy in terms of social status and working conditions that also leads to an intricate mobility within the different countries.

Deficiencies reported about the study of intra-European movements plus all the problems in establishing an international comparative framework for the analysis of artistic professions makes research on mobility within European artistic labour markets quite dense.

Searching mobility across national borders

When searching for research on European mobility and its causes one realises there is a great deal to be explained due to the few reliable sources of information. Firstly, at macro level, there is a scarce supply of quantitative data to measure and evaluate dimension and long-term impact, including directions of flows, intensity and regularity of movements. Existing datasets are patchy, incomplete and present significant blank spots because current movements are too volatile for the statistical eye.

Then, at micro level, backgrounds and social-demographic profiles of artists working across borders, their personal and professional drives, the conditions they face in the different countries and in respect to activities and purposes pursued as well as the consequences in terms of their lives, careers and artistic projects and practices remain largely unclear.

This grey area is due to the intricate relation of multilayered dimensions such as personal, sectorial and national frameworks producing distinct push and pull factors. In addition mobility experiences might lead to more mobility and provoke changes in original drivers but also modify conditions and profiles since artistic and personal projects are dynamic and in constant reformulation. In this scenario it is intricate to determine reasons, to isolate categories or to follow and make sense out of individual paths.

Social sciences, including statistics and demography, are having trouble to acknowledge and adapt their conceptual frameworks and instruments of measurement to current diversifying transnational movements and movers and consequently increasing multicultural societies and transdisciplinary practices. Their paradigms and methodologies are questioned at heuristic level since corresponding to an idea of stable, coherent, single-culture societies organised in nation-states.

Intra-EU movements are kind of imperceptible which further complicates the already difficult task of assembling migration data that differs from one EU member to another because of discrepancies in the sources, concepts and methods of records collection. EU citizens can relocate for temporary or intermittent stays without any stringent necessity to register abroad, either demand for visas or permits. Inside the Schengen area, frontier control was abolished and there is no record of cross-border movements. This hidden population is not registered as “foreigner” in any systematic way by host countries. They are also very difficult to reach for survey purposes by the standard means of door-stepping or random questionnaires. Recchi (2006) explains that host countries governments’ policies are based on estimates and guesswork, and on the very blunt instrument of census data. Meanwhile, foreign missions and embassies of the home country are generally contacted only by a tiny minority at times of crisis or for routine services. For Favell (2008) free movement draws a puzzle as data is notoriously unreliable when measuring mobility that does not fit neatly into its definition of an act of international migration⁸⁸.

On the other side, increased opportunities for mobility have been changing motivations, faces but also types of movements and these new features are not yet grasped by national administrative surveys still focused on traditional low skilled permanent migration. EU citizens are entitled to move back and forth between home and host countries at their own will and pace. Thus free movement is likely to have fostered short-term, commuting and circular mobility at the expenses of permanent settlement abroad. This ever-circular migration is even more difficult to catch.

⁸⁸ As defined by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD): more than 1 year official settled residence, plus de-registration of residency back home.

In the EU free space movements and movers get diversified urging to reconsider data sources and collecting methods in order to make available regular and more reliable datasets that can clarify current mobility in Europe. In lack of a common EU migration agenda it is hard to reach the cooperation level between member-states that would allow for the respective institutions to work together steadily on this issue⁸⁹.

Moreover, the study of mobility calls for an approach that adopts a European driven perspective, as national case studies or traditional international comparisons do not allow seeing what is happening at a supra-national degree. Mobility multilayered dimensions interrelating in a dynamic way individual and institutional levels across national and European frameworks question methodological tools normally used in social sciences. International comparisons have been following in general two different methods: “term by term” and “cultural context”. Both types of comparison seem to be stuck within national or cultural paradigms and their differences. According to Maurice (1989: 185) when comparing term-by-term, each term or category can have different meanings for each society under analysis. Moreover the contribution of the culturalist paradigm appears frozen by its emphasis on the importance of cultural contexts in determining institutions, representations and action. This approach simply describes statically the different systems whether political-institutional and legal; organisational and professional practices; education and training profiles and compares them as unique case studies. The issue of transnational mobility requires going further than static national or disciplinary cases.

The transnational level is more than the mere sum of its parts, beyond a simple collection of national labour markets figures and conditions or even of import/export of art produced nationally. The mobility of artists might be generating a transnational space of collaborative creation, production, touring and networking. Therefore it is fundamental to consider how frameworks at European level influence and transform career paths, including conditions and consequences to working aspirations, processes, and outputs. So it is crucial to connect and create links and meanings out of all this

⁸⁹ The European Commission is promoting the development of the European higher education and research area by the development of research centres consortiums and projects intending to join efforts and collect together the different pieces of this puzzle.

partial national data clarifying what the European dimension, incorporated into the potential of mobility, might add to artists' working conditions and profile.

Therefore, this research targets the EU level in order to grasp what commonly emerges when engaging in mobility across national borders. In order to capture transnational or supra-national dimensions there is a need to develop a methodological strategy that looks into joint aspects amongst diverse cases, prevailing over discipline differences, individual features and career paths or national contexts. So, though the unit of analysis is the individual profile, the intention is to go beyond microanalysis of individuals. The data obtained is not meant to develop comparisons of different national or disciplinary cases but to concentrate on common features shared by professionals in relation to their aspirations and competences for mobility in the performing arts in the EU.

Actually, statistically speaking, being a qualitative study, it cannot aspire to generalise to the whole of the EU territory nor be representative of any national or disciplinary case. The target of this exploratory research on the mobility of performing artists' across the EU is to be illustrative and to point out common features and possible trends.

This research scope spans and refers to the EU as a territorial and economical-political unit of analysis. The term Europe is on its turn used when refereeing to a cultural entity. Individuals and processes analysed have the EU and its free movement principle as main background scenario and factor allowing and enhancing mobility. However, it is important to note, that performing artists mobility is not constrained within the EU. Professionals link and develop projects with peers beyond administrative and political borders in the neighbouring countries and actually worldwide, most especially with the support of digital global communication tools. Therefore it is important to acknowledge their relations and experiences beyond the EU. Moreover within the EU live and work in a permanent basis or just pass by in the context of their work many art professionals coming from third countries to whom EU citizenship does not apply.

Lastly, to sum up, in what comes to the concept of mobility in the frame of this research, it concentrates on movement of performing artists in the EU for the purpose of career development: to improve working conditions and tools, social status and creative processes. In this respect, it covers all types of activities and drivers pursued across

geographical, political-administrative, linguistic, disciplinary and cultural borders such as: creating, producing, touring, participating in meetings and debates, studying and training, taking up a job and/or attending events and meeting peers. Mobility goes beyond a territorial/geographical concept to include also movement across disciplines, jobs/work projects, languages or other categories. Actually it may span the so-called virtual mobility. Nowadays performing artists also make use of ICT, notably the internet and social networks, to establish contacts, communicate and develop their projects. These practices are considered within this research, notably as working tools and alternative means that facilitate mobility.

Within the activities mentioned above, the establishment of collaborative creation, production, dissemination and discussion/advocating projects across geographical borders, beyond the mere touring abroad of art works already accomplished home is subject to special attention. It is a more recent phenomena, largely feeding into the EU free mobility zone as well as current communication and transports developments and remains largely unexplored by research literature.

Linking causes, conditions and consequences: analysis model

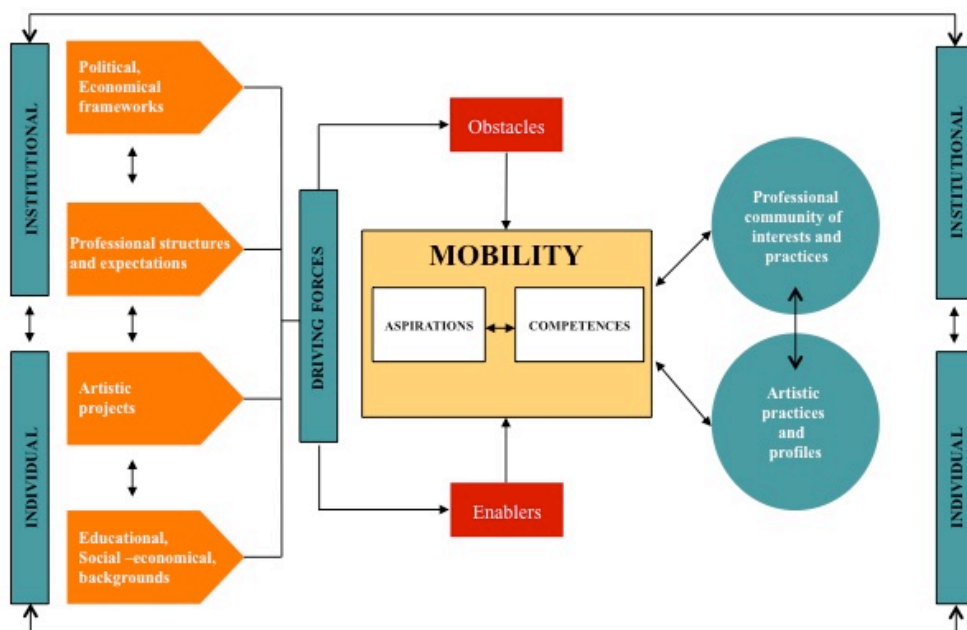


Image n.2 - Causes, conditions and consequences of performing artists' mobility in the EU

The above Image n.2 sets the background scene and analysis model of the present research. It puts into relation the main concepts and variables, illustrating questions and levels of analysis proposed and their interdependent connections.

Mobility, in this image (n.2), is inscribed as a potential whose access and action depend on the articulation of both, individual and institutional levels. In each of them, existing frameworks configure causes and conditions that may act either as push or pull factors enabling or hindering mobility decision-taken and action. This scheme designs mobility as a social phenomenon in the same way Mauss⁹⁰ defined the total social phenomenon since it results of the articulation of mutual dependent relations between diverse institutional and individual dimensions.

The institutional level of analysis includes political, economical, and professional frameworks. All these different structures affect each other and joined together define institutional causes and conditions for mobility.

Political and economical governance systems, combining both national and EU level, shape living and working projects and conditions. The development of global economic logics in parallel with the EU single market and integration process require workers and citizens to be flexible and engage in mobility. The blurring of material, mental and communication borders at the level of markets claims for transnational mobility of professionals in diverse sectors. At the EU level, these structures promote mobility by providing conditions and/or resources that nurture aspirations and competences to mobility via notably: education and training exchange programmes; the Bologna process and directives on the recognition of qualifications and diplomas; funding schemes promoting cooperation; Community legislation on the coordination of tax and social security systems across the EU; web portals and other information systems on EU free movement rights in the different policy levels.

Moreover, specific professional structures, in this case the performing arts sector, rooted at national level yet connected European-wide, mould causes and conditions for creation, production and dissemination across borders and influence the way mobility is

⁹⁰ MAUSS, M. (1924) "Essai sur le Don. Forme et raison de l'échange dans les sociétés archaïques", *Revue L'Année Sociologique*, 1923-4, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France (PUF).

perceived and experienced. In the performing arts, the low level of professional regulation at national and EU level facilitates flexibility to develop projects cross-borders and cross-genres, disciplines or sector, home and abroad. On the other side, it also draws a fragile social and institutional framework, making it hard for artists to survive on their own in the EU enlarged and more complex market. Nevertheless the professional level relating with above political and economical logics and dynamics, inscribes mobility into artist's career aspirations and practices, structuring a professional field where mobility is intrinsic.

Though the scheme is set at the EU level, it is nonetheless crucial to take into account the need to inscribe these logics into the national/territorial background scenario that moulds and feeds into the EU dimension. Political, economical and professional frameworks are rooted and regulated at national level defining therefore disparate conditions and drivers for mobility for the citizens of the different member-states. Moreover, geographical and cultural dimensions also influence and differentiate the mobility potential and consequently define types and directions of flows (this aspect will be discussed in Chapter 5 "Away from peripheries into central urban hubs").

In what comes to the individual level, it refers to mutually dependent dimensions such as educational attainments, social-economical backgrounds and circumstances and the artistic purposes and projects. These features span social categories such as family status, gender, age, nationality, financial resources, as well as educational and professional qualifications. All together they set the ground for artistic experiences and consequent choices and paths, defining the way an individual may develop (or not) mobility aspirations and competences.

In this respect, several categories influence both aspirations and competences often in opposing ways. They define assets to consider engaging in mobility and determine whether an individual is "fit enough". Socialisation within families and later within formal education and professions contribute to define horizons and type of aspirations and may provide (or not) resources such as command of languages, travelling experience, curiosity and other related skills. Economical means determine capacities to invest materially in an international career. Family status and projects mould career paths and in return get readjusted. Gender makes a difference in what work plans and autonomy is concerned despite the current changes and increase of the number of

women that engage in mobility (referred in Chapter 2 “Emerging transnational trends”). Age along with work experience shapes aspirations and gives access to different mobility opportunities and incentives. Social networks and contacts may be decisive by providing examples, but also support and confidence.

These institutional and individual categories operate as driving forces whether to enable or to hinder aspirations and competences for mobility of individuals or social groups. Individuals may develop a wish to move and thus become potential users of mobility. But even if they assume that it is worth the effort, this is just the beginning of the process. Many times the drive is bigger than the means. The other way round is also possible.

One may develop aspirations for mobility but be unable to go forward as it lacks specific competences or the institutional circumstances do not favour. This is the situation, for example, of a theatre director who would like to get training on leadership abroad yet does not master the due language. Or the case of a musician, national of a third country, that wants to take up a temporary post in a band in an EU country but sees its work permit denied. Yet competences may also inspire or hinder the development of aspirations. When a choreographer is a proficient user of social networking tools might well develop virtual contacts that motivate and grow into plans and projects with peers in other countries. Or on the other way round again, the absence of fundraising competences might prevent the development of aspirations to develop a cross-border project as funding opportunities coming from other countries are unknown. Moreover, even if institutional structures promote mobility, as in the case of the EU free movement area, one may not have any pronounced wish to move due to its family situation, gender or age. Aspirations and competences are then also mutually dependent and conditioned by individual features and institutional structures.

This research chose to concentrate on the analysis of strategic and relational types of competence (following notably the typology of Parente, 2008) since mobility stresses the need to hold/develop these associated competences (to those of a technical-artistic sort) in order to remain on the scene (as demonstrated in Chapter 1 “Creative potential to be unlocked”). These are competences required by nowadays labour markets integrated in the above described political and economical frameworks. This research is

therefore not looking into technical-artistic competences. Their analysis would demand direct observation of creation processes, which was not contemplated in the research project especially since artistic activities lack standardised criteria to evaluate and describe functions.

Moreover, the following empirical analysis has chosen to concentrate on the individual dimensions inscribed within the concept of mobility as a potential not exploring those under the institutional side, that are: right – freedom and right-entitlement (see Image n.1 in Chapter 3 “From right to competence”). Because individuals are central to this research process and thus scheme of analysis since inscribed into the qualitative paradigm. Presupposing the existence of a certain degree of freedom to transform social conditions and their own agency, mobility cannot be purely considered a function of the job market or political governance system, but it is also the result of choices made among alternative options. The potential for mobility is formatted by the life course of those involved and by their financial, social and cultural capital, which together define the range of possible specific choices in terms of opportunities and projects.

In the course of mobility experiences, reliant on individual and institutional circumstances translated into aspirations and competences, working practices as well as professional profiles, both at individual and institutional level might be modified by contact, integration and interaction with other processes, partners and environments.

On one side, while mobility renovates artistic practices and profiles it provides a space for interaction across-borders that might contribute to develop a community of practices and interests that gradually may trigger the sector’s collective organisation. As a matter of fact, this increased interaction at the professional community level is as well a consequence of mobility aspirations and competences. Individuals feel the need to connect interests and resources and organise jointly in order to facilitate their cross-border aspirations and projects. In this respect, formal and informal networks are serving as mediators and facilitators of mobility.

Finally, these changes, on their turn, may provoke reformulations of both aspirations and competences, thus alter as well individual features. On a longer-term, these may gradually contribute to adjustments back in the institutional frameworks, notably in

relation to the specific professional field. Certainly, a more structured professional sector would be better positioned to influence institutional conditions at the EU (and national levels) and consequently shift individual features and then aspirations and competences for mobility.

On the whole, individual mobility experiences may feed new aspirations and competences that when followed by consecutive mobility attempts will keep on provoking changes to practices, profiles and to the professional community in general, influencing back to other institutional frameworks. Mobility, this way, may act up as a dynamic input to performing artists' careers at European level, feeding their constant reformulation and pushing the sector's collective organisation.

Encountering performing artists around in the EU: empirical strategy

The hurdles of research on mobility and in the arts field referred above are felt most particularly when setting up the empirical strategy. In order to tackle the gaps and features portrayed and approach this research object "on the move" the choice was made to follow a qualitative paradigm. As an exploratory research on the mobility of performing artists' across the EU, the empirical analysis is meant to raise and clarify how aspirations and competences operate and provoke consequences at the individual and professional community/institutional level.

Within the qualitative postulate, the methodology has been inspired by the so-called grounded theory (as introduced before in this Chapter "Exploring the qualitative dimension of EU mobility: choice of paradigm"). This approach advocates the generation of theory from data in a cyclical inductive-deductive type of logic. It attempts to unearth theoretical categories from data itself rather than from a predisposed static set of hypothesis. In parallel and/or as a consequence, theories also inform the continuation of data collection (Glaser, 2002).

Within this model, research questions, concepts and the model of analysis have been in constant reformulation throughout the whole research process. The empirical strategy

itself also involved constant sampling and analysis in order to integrate new inputs coming from the development of theory.

In what comes to the research techniques, interviews were chosen for proceeding with the data collection. Interview as a tool allows an “internal” in-depth perspective to the other; to the way interviewees/individuals see their own practices and the field they belong to. This tool permits to see beyond what is observable and documented, including: feelings; thoughts; intentions; meanings given to behaviours. The aim is to enquire and discuss perceptions and impact on the interviewees’ working practices and profiles on their experience of accessing and engaging in mobility across-borders in the EU (Witzel, 2000).

Considering interviews as a technique, which application is not neutral, it is important to notice the gap between the levels of discourse and that of practice (Foddy, 1993: 22). The situation of enquiry is also a social one. In this respect the interactionism paradigm notes that meanings given by individuals to their own social acts are produced within acts themselves. Also interviewees are taken to build up a definition of the situation of interview along with the interviewer. In order to mitigate the most possible these processes, it is essential to expose clearly research aims and questions to the interviewee in the very beginning (see interview script ahead).

The next stage concerned the setting up of the sampling process and overcome the dilemma of identifying the adequate respondents to answer the research questions. Being an exploratory study based on the grounded theory it better entails a non-probabilistic sampling not aiming at generalisation. This type of sample is worth by itself, not substituting a population. Therefore, it cannot aspire to generalise to the whole of the EU territory nor be representative of any national or disciplinary case. The empirical analysis target is to be illustrative and to point out common features and possible trends.

Performing artists engaging in mobility were then spotted and assembled by the “snowball effect” technique⁹¹, that started off from two distinct populations: the databases of applicants and grantees of two transnational mobility funds: *Step Beyond*⁹² (2003-2006) and the *Roberto Cimetta Fund*⁹³ (1999-2005).

Performing artists selected from the above databases were contacted and a set of presencial interviews was scheduled according to availability and feasibility of encounters. This departure cluster generated a new chain of contacts gradually giving place to a larger group for interview scheduling purposes. In addition, other contacts were added obtained among the members and connections of an international contemporary performing arts network⁹⁴. The priority given to explore diversity of profiles and backgrounds was the conducting line of the sample construction process.

The following table describes the main features of the final group assembled and interviewed in total of 83 professionals:

Categories	Number
Nationalities	
EU south: ES, GR, IT, PT	17
EU northwest: AT, BE, DK, FI, FR, DE, IE, LU, NL, SE, UK	34
EU central east: BG, CY, CZ, EE, HU, LT, LV, MT, PL, RO, SI, SK	22
Third country nationals	10
Professional occupations	
Creation and interpretation	43
Management, production and programming	17
Administration, education and training, research, policy making and analysis	13

⁹¹ This effect refers to the process of a snowball growing by picking up additional snow as it rolls. In the framework of sampling refers to a sample giving origin to other samples. In other words: a chain of contacts is obtained from a departure basic sample to whose members are asked to provide other contacts and so on.

⁹² Supporting Travel for European Projects is a mobility fund launched in 2003 by the European Cultural Foundation aiming at strengthening cultural ties between European countries that are not currently members of the EU and the present EU countries through supporting individual mobility in the setting-up phase of cultural and artistic initiatives. <http://www.eurocult.org/grants/step-beyond-travel-grants> (accessed in March 2012)

⁹³ This travel fund supports since 1997 artistic exchanges, collaborations and mobility in the Euro-Mediterranean area and it is addressed to all professional artists, cultural operators or technicians working in the fields of contemporary performing arts, visual arts or cinema. <http://www.cimettafund.org> (accessed in March 2012).

⁹⁴ IETM – International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts (<http://www.ietm.org>).

Artistic disciplines	
Dance	25
Music	12
Theatre	21
Transdisciplinary	25
Age groups	
<30 years old	22
31-45 years old	37
>46 years old	24
Gender	
Female	49
Male	34
TOTAL	83

Table n.1 – Description of research sample

In order to ensure diversity of the population analysed respondents were selected by varying a set of categories: nationalities; professional profiles and occupations; artistic disciplines; age and gender. As said before, the group studied does not intend to be representative of the European population neither of any of the categories here combined. Therefore figures were presented only in absolute terms just to describe the sample. The selection by categories strictly aimed at providing diversity of profiles thus of meanings, representations, backgrounds and paths.

Geographically speaking this group comes from the whole of the EU divided into three territorial groups: EU south (17); EU northwest (34); EU central and east (22); plus third countries nationals living and/or working permanently or temporarily in the EU (10). The nationality here listed does not necessarily correspond to the place of residence of the respondents, as some may live and/or work in other countries in a permanent or temporary basis.

Professional profiles were grouped by occupations: creation and interpretation (43); management, production and programming (17); administration, education and training, research, policy making and analysis (13). Although priority was given to artists, the sample included also other profiles within the performing arts sector so that analysis would take into account different perspectives. On the other side, many of the

professionals interviewed, as common in the arts field, accumulate diverse tasks and roles within the sector and even beyond, with various employment status (freelancers; temporary or permanent employees), therefore some of those here listed within managerial and administrative profiles may also carry on artistic pursuits.

In what comes to artistic disciplines, the group was divided into the performing arts main traditional genres: dance (25); music (12); theatre (21); and transdisciplinary (25). The sample considered genres in between and comprises those that work transdisciplinary, interacting and joining together different disciplines, even beyond the performing arts field. In this last category, professionals with visual arts background yet working within the performing arts were also interviewed.

Age groups were assembled within three different categories: <30 years old (22); between 31-45 years old (37); and all those older than 46 years old (24).

Finally, gender wise the group is divided into: female (49) and male (34).

As the grounded theory advocates, the generation of theory from data, in order to feed the definition of the research concepts and questions, exploratory interviews were held while the literature was being reviewed, so that new data collection could feed theory from the beginning. Therefore, interviews were led in two different moments of this research. A first round of interviews (25) was held in 2004-2005 aiming at exploring the field and informing the research agenda. Then a second and major part of the interviews took place in 2006-2007 and aimed more directly to answer research questions and test assumptions.

The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured⁹⁵ form and scripts were conceived in thematic chapters that correspond to categories in analysis:

I – Individual social-economic profile and background

II – Aspirations: individual motivations; institutional conditions;

III – Competences for mobility

IV – Obstacles to mobility

⁹⁵ Interviews that follow a general standardised script containing pre-defined groups of questions, and in parallel, allow eliminating or adding subjects and questions in the course of the action.

V – Outcomes of mobility

VI – Role of organisations

VII – Future individual plans and institutional scenarios for mobility

Questions within each chapter slightly varied according to the respective individuals' profiles and experiences and between the exploratory and the development phases of enquiry, though main themes and aims have been maintained. This was the case of question groups III on “competences” as well as VI on “role of organisations” that were both substantially increased due to the extent of references and pertinence of narratives voiced in this domain. While regarding competences, the European Reference Framework (EC, 2007a) was explored and tested onto performing artists' mobility experiences; in what comes to organisations, the role and development of formal and informal networks and the sense of a community of interests and practices were debated. In line with the grounded theory postulates, data was feeding theory, thus research questions and the model of analysis have been re-formulated according to inputs coming from interviews.

Finally, within the same logic, the sample was accomplished and the snowball effect reached a halt, when answers received started to be repetitive despite of the diversification of profiles and backgrounds of interviewees, what is known as “saturation of the sample”.

The interviews were further on analysed through combining two approaches: content and categorical. The analysis was developed intra-interview and inter-interviews. Each piece was summarised in key-findings and data was reduced and classified into categories that best considered the research issues. All categories were pre-specified and translated into the script questions, but also new categories came out during the process of interviewing and the analysis itself. This technique allows associating categories, content and context. Content was analysed in a meaningful way: “why were things said” and “meanings of things said”. Context was kept in order to retain the meanings.

At the end all units of analysis were compared together and relationships and linkages established. This option allows getting very close to the data, though all analytical choices “shape the story data tells”. The process of selecting, focusing, abstracting and transforming data into information creates in fact a new speech.

The following Part II of this dissertation is dedicated to the analysis of aspirations and competences to mobility illustrated by quotations from the interviews. Interviewees are kept anonymous, so quotations are not named. However, each quotation is accompanied by references to nationality, discipline and professional occupation merely to improve understanding of the issue under debate. The choice of quotations was made according to interest and adequacy of statement to the particular themes under analysis. Each quote serves as an illustration example that is a proof or testimony of experience but not a representation of the specific category, therefore the distribution of countries, disciplines or occupations of those quoted is not balanced nor ordered.



PART II
ASPIRATIONS AND COMPETENCES FOR PERFORMING ARTISTS’
MOBILITY

5. OVERCOMING NATIONAL BORDERS

Away from peripheries into central urban hubs

In what comes to arts, cities have always seen the development of its main trends and dynamics. Recent EUROSTAT (2011) data informs that the majority of artists in the EU work in densely populated areas, though half of them from home. This last feature is striking because ICT is supposed often to contribute to diminish territorial differences. However data shows that it is still crucial for artists to be based physically in urban clusters. Cities are places of attraction and nests to artists because they concentrate infrastructures and means; they facilitate meetings to take place; connections to be established; and projects to be nurtured and implemented.

In the case of performing artists in the EU, there are certainly regions that are more central than others, but what makes them move are cities rather than nation-states. Artists tend to escape peripheries and the countryside towards urban areas notably the capital city or even directly outside their country's border towards a big cosmopolitan hub abroad.

Performing artists coming from the countryside are usually confronted with scarcity of resources to nurture and develop their careers. This barrier is felt from the very beginning, when aptitudes and prospect professional choices are considered. Small milieus lack specific education and training opportunities; active venues with regular events and contact to artists capable of inspiring and supporting their engagement towards an artistic path.

A composer coming from a small town in Estonia reminded how his career decision to take the road to his capital city Tallinn was stimulated by a teacher in the local high school:

I hadn't even considered studying music because there was no school where I lived. Yet I had a teacher who helped me to make music in my free time and he

inspired me to move on to the capital city.

(music composer, Estonian)

This teacher was the only bridge to music in his birthplace, strong enough to convince him to take music studies that necessarily implied a departure.

At the national scale, urban artistic environments are often to be found in capital cities where resources tend to be centralised. However it depends on each country's cultural policy as well as administrative system. In Germany, for instance, culture is a regional not a national responsibility, so infrastructures and resources are more disseminated through the territory (ERICARTS, 2006).

We may exceptionally find attractive art centres and residencies or even schools in the countryside, sometimes even in remote places, when a certain renowned artist or professor chooses to work in an offbeat location and draws to his spot an international crowd. These cases may bridge to the local communities, but often remain as islands. Artists tend then to come and go, stay for periods but rarely settle permanently.

An actress who did her initial theatre studies in a provincial town school in Sweden ended up her degree in Stockholm due to the lack of a fulfilling artistic environment with dimension and intensity to feed her learning and curiosity:

The school was interesting, with experienced teachers and motivated pupils but no outside connections. Nothing to do after classes, not even one single theatre. I had an urge of going to bigger places with things happening. I did not want my life to be so small.

(actress, Swedish)

In most of the cases and especially for those in earlier ages when just starting up, overall artistic life in small towns is incipient and unsatisfactory for the proper development of an artistic profile and career. So artists leave in search for urban landscapes, inside their country or abroad, in order to acquire the competences and experiences that will feed their careers.

There are some artistic hubs in Europe changing according to artistic disciplines and historic moments. An interview with a researcher that participated on a study focusing on European mobility in the arts and culture, clarified how some trends result often of the availability of jobs, adequate infrastructures or just cheap working and living spaces. These appealing conditions may result of a policy decision to invest on the development of certain cultural organisations and facilities, as the case of Germany for classical music venues with permanent companies:

Many musicians are drawn to Germany for its huge network of orchestras and opera houses.

(cultural policy researcher, Finish)

Yet trends may also just follow-on a specific historical circumstance as the example of Berlin in this last decade:

There is a vibrant visual arts community in Berlin that has been extended to all other art forms as it turned to an artistic hot spot in Europe. It concentrates people, venues, events, schools and art centres. It became an exciting place after the Wall came down, as in former East Berlin there were cheap studios and a lot of wide spaces to be converted to the arts.

(cultural policy researcher, Finish)

Metropolis and central locations in Europe, like London, Paris, Amsterdam, Brussels and Berlin are common destinations for the arts sector. Then at regional level, some other cities may operate as focal points for the surrounding countries mostly due to cultural and linguistic affinities. It has been the case for Sarajevo in the Balkans, Copenhagen in the case of Scandinavia or Barcelona⁹⁶ for the western Mediterranean countries. When considering mobility from outside Europe, capitals such as Lisbon, Madrid, Paris, London, Amsterdam and Brussels, are key for those coming from former colonies. Common language and facilitated administrative entry and settlement conditions keep these older ties alive. Yet the majority seem to head preferably to the

⁹⁶ Barcelona has also been developing in the last years as an important media and design hub in the larger European context.

big European hubs⁹⁷ when not considering the USA (ERICARTS, 2006). Indeed centrality and/or economic development often overshadow potential cultural or linguistic affinities, as artists that circulate from Estonia to Finland or from Romania to France might well be more numerous than those who take the other direction.

A singer and a theatre interpreter, coming both from countries in the peripheries of Europe – Portugal and Finland - give account of the benefits of living and working in central locations. Both of them have chosen to move to bigger northwest central European cities instead of considering those closer by geographically or linguistically. In fact, central cosmopolitan cities end up congregating many dynamics and resources, result of a “snowball effect” described by this singer from Lisbon who moved to Amsterdam:

All the best venues and ensembles are around the corner. What an incredible advantage, being close to France, Belgium, United Kingdom, and Germany where so much is going on. Work offers pop up like a snowball.

(singer, Portuguese)

In this part of Europe this artist found more opportunities to perform, due to higher number of groups, concerts and venues when considering the whole surrounding region. He sees the concentration of chances as a great gain since in Portugal opportunities and circulation are minute making him feel at the “*corner of Europe*”.

When listening to another voice, that of a Finish theatre interpreter, her comparison of Helsinki to Paris ends up stressing the same motives as the Portuguese:

Behind the sea we meet less professionals from abroad. In Paris many artists are working and visiting all the time. In this atmosphere one easily develops new kinds of connections.

(actress, Finish)

⁹⁷ When considering the mobility of researchers, as there is a lack of data on the mobility of artists, the study of Delicado (2010) showed that the majority of Portuguese researchers tend to choose the north western European or North American universities as destination countries than opting for the ones closer geographically (Spain) or linguistically (Brasil, France).

In Paris she appreciated how easy was to get acquainted and inspired by the most contemporary practices, “*everybody comes to perform here*”, so she could attend performances from all over the world; and how easy and cheap was to travel to other big cities.

In parallel with increased work opportunities referred by the Portuguese in Amsterdam, these bigger cities are also appealing due to its amplified dynamics result of the coexistence of human and material resources that makes them vibrant artistic hubs. These environments are considered more inspiring since capable of offering more and diverse opportunities to see artistic works as well as all sorts of events and happenings. At the same time, they also provide better occasions to come across other professionals with whom to discuss and exchange views and possibly develop projects. Therefore the Finish actress felt more “at home” in Paris than in her birthplace Helsinki.

On the other hand, the outskirts of Europe push professionals out as they have less dynamics and are more expensive places to travel in and out as there is no benefit from economies of scale. The peripheral condition is aggravated since traveling is costly and more complicated. A theatre manager, also from Finland, pointed out the weight of the financial implications of mobility decisions taken from non-central locations:

You cannot make last minute reservations for a whole orchestra or theatre group because airlines charge the highest price. Some groups cannot pay a travel inside our big country, let alone get to the airport. Even if your host would pay half of the costs, still if you go far or have a big group, half is really a lot of money.

(theatre manager, Finish)

Consequently, options that should be mainly artistic driven, such as destinations – where to present a show, meet up partners or take up a course -, end up heavily reliant on financial and geographical criteria.

This way, despite freedom of movement, most of the routes taken are very much customised. Looking at the geography of Europe, in the performing arts, most movements are from east to west, from south to north and from the poles to the centre.

Basically the main reason is the income and working conditions differences that keep the direction trends mentioned before stable. In a lower extent there are also movements in the opposite directions, searching for new inputs and surroundings, a very specific learning or for less expensive locations and workforce.

Autissier (ERICARTS, 2006) shows one of these reverse cases: the delocalisation of French film and music production towards the east of Europe. When looking for cheaper productions, labour force or locations, producers might well travel the least common road. A Hungarian musician refers to the remaining economic advantages of “going east” to import operas, orchestras and musicians to the west:

It is much better paid for us and still a lot cheaper for them.

(musician, Hungarian)

However, at the individual level, some artists might be interested in making the trip to east when they want to work with a renewed or specific director or ensemble and to learn a concrete technique or method as explains this orchestra director also from Hungary:

Mainly young artists who want to acquire practice or to work with a recognised artist may come to the east.

(orchestra director, Hungarian)

Aspirations for mobility in the arts concern often learning and working along with those consider “the best”, not only economic reasons. So artistic aspirations might twist geographical trends. Otherwise it is rarer to find western artists in the east as they are less paid and have less working conditions in general in this region.

In the attractive central west parts of Europe the profusion of venues and events and consequently of jobs and work opportunities is higher and on top it is cheaper and easier to travel. As the bellow quoted cultural policy researcher affirmed:

Movement means a one-way ticket for those who face entry barriers and/or career restraints, as it is the case for artists coming from the south east of

Europe (SEE).

(cultural policy researcher, Finish)

The lack of local infrastructures, work conditions and schemes promoting intra-regional connections has also forced some to look to western European opportunities. In this respect, one-way migration rather than circulation is the norm and brain drain comes out as one negative consequence to the sending countries when they are outside the free movement zone.

Territorial discrepancies regarding resources have always been in the core roots of migration of all times. Geographies materialise and mould institutional and individual backgrounds. Resources are scarce and concentrate in the most central locations where accessibility is higher making flows more intense and diverse. Arts are nurtured and dependent on these inputs, most of them concentrated in urban cosmopolitan and centrally located areas. Therefore, the development of aspirations for mobility is reliant on geographical locations. Neither the EU integration project nor improved ICT tools have been up to now able to overcome territorial contexts. Artists keep on with the need to leave behind peripheries and rural areas, whether at national or European level. Less developed regions and economies remain less attractive, as we are far from a harmonised labour market throughout the whole EU.

Then the “snowball effect” described above makes these geographies less appropriate for arts career’s development in a double perspective. Alongside being less resourceful and thus less attractive, these places hold fewer means for continued mobility. Travels in and out are usually more expensive thus circulation reduced and connections less abundant. Consequently, professionals from these territories develop higher aspirations for mobility, yet their plans are costlier and more complex to put forward. Engaging in mobility when from peripheral locations requires better off economical and social backgrounds. Geographical disadvantage turns often into economical as well as artistic at the end of the scale.

In cases when geographical and economical (and political) causes for mobility come together, most of the times, individuals engage in permanent migration paths heading central wealthier hubs in Europe rather than opting for recurrent mobility. From these

central urban hubs they can circulate more easily and be constantly “where things happen”. Geographical mobility is thus a key aspiration to access active markets and multiplicity of learnings and opportunities that feed artistic practices and profiles.

Looking for larger and structured markets

Performing artists often feel restrained by insufficient national markets dimension to nurture their artistic development and economic sustainability. They lack quantity and diversity of audiences, but also adequate working structures and tools. In this scenario, competition for means is high as resources are scarce. The urge to go on tour, take up residencies or engage in projects in the broader European scene, beyond a purely artistic choice, is also a mean for endurance.

Very few individual artists or groups have a space of their own, so they are always in the search for a host. Venues and festivals with international programmes are heavy supporters of mobility by commissioning works and proposing co-productions within cross-borders partnerships. These joint enterprises offer places to create and produce as well as to present the final works. The number of residencies have boosted throughout Europe as they help filling in the gap of working spaces.

Scarcity and high competition for resources available nationally leads artists to look for opportunities outside borders as this dance artist expresses:

It is easier to get funding for a small residency period abroad than working home, because competition for funds and spaces is too big.

(dancer, choreographer, Czech)

In parallel, adding an international flare to a career might also contribute to improve one's position home and consequently access to domestic subsidies. International experience is due to raise distinction and prestige of a professional curriculum in the national arena. This arts manager from Bosnia recognises:

Many wish to go abroad just to gain greater recognition and to come back with an enhanced status.

(arts manager, Bosnian)

On the other hand, performing abroad allows the extension of show's life course, thus bringing extra income and further artistic development. According to many artists, international touring, participation in festivals and co-productions are financially compensatory and better paid than the actual season home. As a dance artist and producer from Belgium has put it in a straight way:

If we do not tour, we have to produce a new piece to survive.

(dancer, choreographer, producer, Belgian)

Presenting the show as much as possible is a source of revenue that keeps the project running but also the organisation behind. Otherwise professionals involved just have to engage in a new production or find alternative paths. Yet touring is also a way of maturing and keeping the show alive in front of a wider diversity of audiences. Artists may develop their performance and vision of their own work by simply repeating it, but they also benefit from the myriad of interpretations and reactions they get from confronting it to different publics in different places. The extension of markets allows economic sustainability and artistic progression to go hand in hand.

Yet national markets limitations are particularly felt by those coming from small sized countries and/or without a structured cultural policy that is supportive of independent professionals. Such policy comprises a network of active venues as well as regular subsidies that allow creation, production and touring of art works. Moreover it also concerns the action of institutions responsible for education and training but also for social security provision adequate to their specific needs. Unsuitable working infrastructures, the absence of an adequate social status, dull education and training offers and dim international scenes drive artists to travel and search beyond borders. In this case, mobility is less an artistic project or a matter of market expansion, but rather the way to survival.

This scenario is still the case for many professionals coming from countries that were ruled earlier by political regimes oppressive to independent art where support to culture was just channelled for state companies. This is the case of Romania and Estonia, but also of Portugal if we consider its more remote times, from where the next examples from contemporary dance come from.

Referring to a recent past, a Romanian choreographer and manager describes how the situation was dramatically incipient:

There was nothing out of my own independent group. I've decided to leave and study cultural management to understand how I could improve the dance scene back home.

(choreographer and manager, Romanian)

For Romanian dance artists' mobility was essential, as they had no ground to work nationally. This artist opted to invest on education in management, in order to strengthen his capacity for helping to build up his artistic field once back home. Dance programmers and producers from different countries referring to this period point out that Romanian as well as Portuguese contemporary dance artists "made it" firstly internationally before establishing at the national level, as there were no possibilities for development home.

Yet, despite the changes, including the EU accession of these countries, another choreographer from another eastern country justifies why her national market is still not structured enough for a proper professional development:

In Estonia contemporary dance is a young art form, so we lack venues for rehearsing and showing.

(choreographer, Estonian)

If infrastructures meagre creators have few places to work and present themselves and audiences have few chances to get acquainted with different art expressions. Then engaging in mobility remains crucial for artists in these countries, as they cannot benefit from an established creation, production and touring system within their own borders.

In the same wavelength and despite the longer democratic path, Portugal still hardly manages to provide a secure and structured system for independent artists as the following dance creator expresses:

It is difficult to build up projects on a longer term and create roots, as we have to re-start always from zero.

(choreographer, Portuguese)

This creator confesses her tiredness towards an ever-ephemeral condition, where subsidies systems alter along with each governmental change and where a social status is still to be achieved. This economic and social instability makes her aspire to move out in search for “*peace of mind*” (and body).

Economical factors mixed with political and geographical features shape unbalanced situations in terms of income and social conditions within Europe. This economic divide, between north-south and east-west of the continent raises divergent motivations for mobility that may easily generate inequalities. A coordinator of a mobility fund for the Mediterranean area prompts:

Mobility is an option for the few who can conceive it. In south and eastern Europe some people hardly have means to pay travelling. Yet, those living outside EU borders do not even have the means to create, so they are forced to travel.

(fund coordinator, French)

For artists who live under supportive economical and political contexts, mobility aspirations relate more to creation and dissemination options. National markets, even with a favourable policy, appear to be too small for the performing arts. Artists still need to go after diversity of inputs so to meet new publics with different visions of their work and new partners with different practices and means.

However, for others lacking studios, production means, funding and a proper social status, outside but also inside the EU, mobility is a pre-condition for their own work. In order to weather the storm, professionals work in different countries, moving after

resources and conditions, since it is not sufficient for their survival and development to stay put in one country. This dance artist from Slovakia illustrates how she builds up, like a puzzle, her career throughout Europe:

I look for opportunities in different places: I go to residency somewhere, work there for a while and dancers join me from different countries.

(dancer, choreographer, Slovak)

This choreographer in her forties lacked a stable material condition in order to settle or benefit from a permanent basis from which explore her art and the world, however she had developed strategic competences that allowed her to ensure work means and tools from different sources.

In the same line as geographical aspirations for mobility, those willing to be mobile out of economic-rooted causes are also highly reliant on previous possession of financial and cultural resources in order to achieve their aims. When artists have no financial background to be able to invest on trips beforehand nor management competences to scrutinise funding and residencies' offers or even hold a passport that does not allow circulating freely, their aspirations and mobility projects can hardly be put into practice. While some are resourceful enough to "afford" their artistic aspirations and path across borders, others cannot even dare to aspire or have no other solution than taking on customised directions and engaging in economic labour migration.

Being driven by subsidies and politics

The availability of funding to create, tour or even study cross-borders originated from the EU, international organisations and even national authorities is feeding mobility aspirations of professionals confronted with limited national resources.

National governments have been supporting cultural activities at the international level, mostly aiming at promoting national productions and identity. Klatic (2007) clarifies that around the two great wars some countries started supporting cultural exchanges to enhance prestige and influence abroad. Nowadays nations continue to support cultural

export, often in a bi-lateral basis though gradually also multilateral, for political and economical reasons.

An artistic director of a symphonic orchestra, from Finland, draws attention for the fact that music is seen as the easiest way to approach other countries as Finnish theatre or literature face language resistances abroad. Therefore government-sponsored international touring is above all meant to:

Promote Finish music, Finnish culture and the respective Finnish city abroad.

(orchestra director, Finish)

From another geography, an officer of a national culture institute, has put clear that their support for mobility is only considered when:

An artwork is inscribed in a set of events with greater promotional impact for the country.

(national culture institute officer, Spanish)

Thus national support schemes look for increasing the country's visibility along with the art piece or professionals behind. National cultural institutes, some with offices throughout the world, are usually the visible side of these policies. They sponsor fellow country nationals to present their work internationally, but also foreign events presenting productions or contents that feature their own national themes or authors. Many artists and operators throughout Europe make use of these institutions, especially those lacking own national support, as this Slovenian dancer tells:

We get around 70% of funding from abroad. Partners are often foreign countries institutes.

(dancer, Slovenian)

However to give financial support, the institutes require that the project connects somehow to their country. In this way, national incentive for mobility is in most cases short or much conditioned by political objectives imposing directions, partners or themes to artistic projects. Nation-states resist to European or multilateral approach and

keep often a national perspective. Funding is still incipient in many countries, especially south and east of Europe and subject to nationality and residence criteria (Baltà, 2011). This issue is particularly damaging for professionals living and working in the peripheries of Europe, as their travel expenses are higher and their opportunities lower. Artists need to conciliate their aspirations and plans with national political targets or look for support somewhere else.

Along with national states, the development of the EU integration project led to the creation in 2000 of a framework programme to support cultural cooperation where mobility of artists and artworks comes as the main objective (Chapter 1 “Intricate barriers and increasing circulation control” and EC, 2007a). In order to benefit from this funding, professionals are supposed to engage in multilateral collaborations with different partners across Europe. The EU has recognised officially artists’ need to travel in the context of their career development and the potential impact of their transnational mobility to the construction of a common European cultural area translated into the words of this European Commission administrator working in culture affairs:

As artists are depicting reality and making a meaning out of that reality, the more they live a European experience, the more they will tell us about Europe and contribute to a sense of European belonging.

(EC administrator, French)

While endorsing artists’ mobility, the EU is investing in the long run in the promotion of the EU integration project. The belief is that while engaging in mobility artists are likely to experience and then express a European dimension through their works. When artists from different countries work together the result overcomes the borders of nationality. When audiences are confronted with these transnational art pieces they also may come into contact with this supra-national cultural dimension (OMC, 2010). The EU expects this culture dimension may facilitate the political project to come closer to citizens.

By providing this funding the EU is contributing to feed artists’ mobility aspirations and projects at the source as well as influencing processes and outcomes. As funding

programmes are not neutral but always responding to different needs and purposes, sometimes contradictory, but that might also be complementary.

Nonetheless EU funding schemes might well serve artists to develop their transnational aspirations and practices within and/or with EU partners. Moreover taking advantage of the tide, the arts field through European networks and organisations are trying to grasp this opportunity to see their political and financial support increased and their mobility hindrances possibly reduced. However though the above beliefs have supporters within the artists' community, artists are not necessarily found or interested in promoting the EU political project via their mobility and works. Artists' aesthetical and ideological options might even oppose or put into question this idea and often they relate and develop their mobility aspirations and projects independently from EU administrative or political borders, linking to professionals in the neighbouring countries and worldwide.

In the same way as the EU, other regional and intergovernmental organisations are also active players in the support of multilateral mobility and cooperation. Artists get good chances to obtain funding from regional sources if they intend to work within a concrete geographic area as this theatre director from Lithuania wisely phrases:

If you engage in Nordic-Baltic collaboration then the possibilities to get Nordic⁹⁸ money are good.

(theatre director, Lithuanian)

These intergovernmental organisations and private funders that operate within a regional focus introduce new layers to cultural cooperation in alternative to national or EU funding, motivating new relationships and directions. The following manager, from central east Europe, makes obvious how the availability of regional funding programmes stimulates creators to consider the targeted territories and partners:

These opportunities are making us consider working with our neighbours, we become aware of them and often find many common identities and goals.

(performing arts manager, Bulgarian)

⁹⁸ The Nordic Council promotes mobility and cultural cooperation around the Nordic and Baltic countries.

In fact, these regional schemes just make possible what would seem natural to happen: neighbours to work side by side. Yet, the lack of funding and conditions to work in their region leads professionals to look blindly to the northwest of Europe, where traditionally most resources and partnerships come from.

Another example is the support given by intergovernmental organisations such as the Council of Europe and several networks and private funders to central and east European artists after the fall of the iron curtain to be mobile and connect across borders. This back up helped professionals to meet other artists and get acquainted with the reality in the EU western countries. However it raised expectations and created a certain dependency on western and international subsidies in what mobility was concerned as the following arts manager from the region expressed:

A lot of artists were largely dependent on western money to travel.

(arts manager, Bosnian)

As in most of these countries, national cultural policies did not develop towards supporting independent creation and their mobility, when funders turned to other areas or themes upon their EU accession, many saw their aspirations frustrated and their cross-borders projects dismantled.

In this way, policy makers shape the market for the arts by deciding where and how to invest thus influencing artistic projects from the cradle. These funds promoting travelling and collaborations in a certain region are necessarily raising aspirations for mobility in the potential beneficiaries and interfering with mobility direction trends and artistic processes and outputs.

A performing arts manager and analyst unveils also the political aspirations behind international residencies opportunities, a “training-research-creation-production” model that has been gathering support from many different sources, from local, regional to international organisations. She clarifies:

The creation act is associated to other interests and motivations. Currently artists are confronted with proposals to interact with new contexts: cultures, communities, places or disciplines.

(performing arts manager and analyst, Portuguese)

In these schemes what moves founders are societal, economical and political aims notably: improving mobility and internationalisation, social cohesion or intercultural dialogue, urban regeneration or cultural tourism, national or European identity. This strategy puts value in the immaterial aspect of residencies, however submits along the focus of the artistic work it supports. As for EU funding for mobility, at the national or local level too, these schemes raise questions regarding the instrumental use of art, as means to achieve other objectives than purely artistic ones. Here resides the ambiguity of art production in relation to subsidies whether public or private. Artists have always to negotiate their plans and expectations in view of the existing conditions.

Another key player in raising and supporting aspirations for mobility within the arts in Europe are cultural networks, spanning the sector's professional and social interests. These organisations have been crucial as mediators, interpreting and channelling the adequate know-how to professionals.

The following theatre director and producer from Germany remarks how:

Networks have been opening doors to artists so to acknowledge and access funds, obtain technical advice and develop contacts.

(theatre director and producer, German)

Another professional, this time a culture network manager, brings up the concept of door openers again, as she describes some of the requests and concerns networks are faced with on the concrete topic of mobility:

People contact us asking: where to go to tour, what to do, how they can obtain funding, doubts regarding visas. Networking opens doors to them.

(network manager, Belgian)

Through networks, professionals receive targeted information on policy developments and key challenges as well as all the available tools, resources and opportunities. Networks have also been engines themselves to the promotion of initiatives like workshops, meetings and exchanges of experiences where face to face social contacts find an appropriate environment to develop in contrast to big international festivals which used to be the traditional meeting points for the sector. Without this helping hand, in many cases, artists would not even develop ambitions for mobility.

However the access and participation in these networks depend as well on personal backgrounds and profiles. Earlier socialisation with mobility develops aspirations and competences but holding economic and social capitals is also crucial to develop and maintain the connections facilitated by the networks.

Matching the integration agenda of EU institutions, mobility has been also a political target of European networks and professional organisations that defend their members' right to freely travel, meet and create together cross-borders. They have been supporting and serving as advocates for this paradigm. The statement of this coordinator of a performing arts network puts it clearly:

We believe circulation is very interesting for artists because it can deepen their understanding of reality by giving them different viewpoints. Our mission is to encourage professionals to collaborate across national borders. When we organise meetings, we bring people from all countries in one spot and give them confidence to collaborate with each other.

(performing arts network coordinator, American/Belgian)

European cultural networks have been advocating for artists' interests and needs in terms of freedom to express and work across-borders, but also of an appropriate social status and support system, by revealing and drawing attention to their specific needs and intensified fragile social condition in the scope of mobility. Gradually networks are voicing the sector needs and interests and in this larger process are also responsible for introducing mobility to many artists' career plans and projects.

Yet aspirations for mobility might be due solely to political causes when we consider the need for peace and for freedom of expression and movement. In fact, many professionals have to engage in mobility escaping repressive regimes or even war. It is precisely this quest that constitutes one of the most essential aspirations for mobility. Even more as artistic creativity and manifestations have difficulty flourishing under conflicts and dictatorships.

The below quoted cultural policy researcher gives some examples from European History in the last century of turbulent moments that generated exodus with a particular emphasis on the Russian and eastern European case (Chapter 1 “Intricate barriers and increasing circulation control”):

The Russian revolution, the great wars, and the consequent occupation by the Soviet regime of the eastern bloc were events that forced many artists to leave. In Russia there has been a brain drain since several generations.

(cultural policy researcher, Finnish)

Many decades later, yet within the same purpose, the following composer, from Estonia, was willing to flee the heavy ideological pressure in his country under the Soviet regime when the Iron Curtain just fallen down:

I was expecting to try St. Petersburg or East Germany, but not the west because it was not permitted. Then things changed politically and I was free, so Helsinki was the nearest western place to go.

(music composer, Estonian)

Many intellectuals, among them several artists, from all over the world have been escaping to more democratic and safe havens, to the EU but also to the USA. Yet, nowadays, mobility from eastern Europe is mostly related to a search for better salaries and working conditions and less due to political reasons. However, as non-EU citizens are not entitled to free movement, the decision to return is constrained, therefore, in many cases, postponed. These professionals end up engaging in permanent migration as they are not allowed to circulate freely.

Even when they are just willing for short-term mobility, other financial and legal obstacles, such as visas requirements, make mobility too expensive and burdensome for the ones coming from outside the Union. A Russian musician living currently in the EU recalls:

Getting a visa can take days. I lived 400 Kms away from Moscow, so I had to stay over there waiting.

(musician, Russian)

Besides the costs and troubles, restrictions can also be embarrassing diminishing professionals' motivation and confidence to interact and participate in the international arena. This arts residency director, dealing with grantees from all over the world, also gives account of the complexity of bureaucratic measures to obtain a visa for the Schengen area. She highlights the unpleasant procedures:

Artists need to show invitations, salary sheets, insurance, bank account extracts, it is very humiliating.

(arts residency director, Spanish)

Artists feel dependent on embassies officials or even custom employees who might just attain to a missing document on their file.

In the same way, transitional measures applied to central and eastern European member-states upon their accession to the EU in 2004 has made many artists deceived in their mobility plans (Chapter 2 “Conflicting restrictions”). A programmer/curator from one of these member-states expressed her disenchantment:

Those proclamations seemed like borders had disappeared and frontiers were open. Not true! This whole set of special measures treat the new members as secondary. It is a dual moral and behaviour.

(visual arts programmer, Slovak)

Artists from this region felt the concern of older member countries that a real flood of persons coming from the east would raise unemployment. They felt the fear of the

“Polish musician in the same way as the Polish plumber”, as an orchestra director from this area too has mocked. These restrictions were sensed as troublesome and inhospitable and diminished aspirations for mobility in many that had developed plans to enjoy the abolishment of borders upon EU accession.

High costs and intricate paper work to obtain authorisations, work permits and visas have been hindering considerably mobility aspirations of those not entitled to free movement. They have to deal with uncertainty and risk, being hardly able to plan or conceive international collaborations, as they demand long-term commitments. Entitlement to mobility (or its absence) influences the type of expectations developed and consequently the potential impact it might have in careers.

In effect mobility plans and projects might depend on the part of Europe you come from. A coordinator of a mobility fund stresses:

Many eastern Europeans still crave for travelling as it can really be an eye-opener and change their lives.

(fund coordinator, Dutch)

This professional believes that still makes a big difference in motivation and impact of mobility experiences whether you were born into free movement or not.

When considering aspirations to mobility under a political dimension, there is a borderline between those who are free to move and those who are not. Nationality or citizenship can make the difference by determining on which side of the EU wall one is. This freedom of circulation but also of expression designs a more suitable environment for artists to concentrate on their own artistic purposes when enduring in the international scene.

On the other side, many funding programmes artists make use of to support their creation across borders carry also parallel political and social objectives. So, policy decision makers may condition the market for arts professionals, interlinking closely political and economical aspirations for mobility within Europe.

Quest for inputs and interaction

Performing artists have since long incorporated mobility aspirations within their careers, from wandering troubadours in Middle Ages to dance companies and music groups touring the globe from the last century on (Chapter 1 “Intricate barriers and increasing circulation control”). This orchestra director recalling the harsh material and transportation conditions in the past emphasised that:

You cannot simply believe how artists could travel, but they did it!

(orchestra director, Hungarian)

Indeed, currently, improvements in transports and communications, as well as political and economical support for mobility, are supposed to have made circulation for artists and their art works simpler and more desirable⁹⁹. The individualisation and portfolio career logic processes, where international experiences are expected, have been extended from early career steps or prerogative of few successful artists to integrate mobility within ordinary career aspirations and practices in a permanent basis.

Nowadays young artists and pre-professionals from all over the world fill a growing number of schools in Europe. According to this manager and dance producer, there are big dance schools with around 50% or 60% foreign students in the United Kingdom and in some renowned schools in the Netherlands and Germany.

In some countries, mobility is not merely a choice to study with established names and institutions, but simply the only way to engage in higher education that one cannot find home. This was the case of the following dance producer from Estonia:

Our very young country has a recent contemporary dance culture. I decided to keep on my studies abroad to open up to a more updated approach, as I wanted to learn different methods such as improvisation and train also my language skills.

(dance producer, Estonian)

⁹⁹ There is no data to acknowledge how many artists actually managed to travel in the past, as there is no data to verify how many do it today. Still, based on overall growth of migration figures (IOM, 2010), we may believe figures have increased in the arts too.

In many cases, once installed abroad, artists may try out their chances in the labour markets as well before opting to go back home. This time a dance manager quoted below keeps on describing this phenomenon that extends from education to labour markets:

When there are auditions or vacancies, companies get hundreds of applications from all over the world. Some big groups even go abroad to make auditions.

(dance manager, Dutch)

This mobility dimension is also to be found in the music field, as this cultural policy researcher tells:

Orchestras in Europe are mostly composed by musicians from different nationalities, even in peripheral countries such as Portugal. In Germany they have almost 90% of foreigners as their big number of venues and ensembles would not find enough qualified people inside borders.

(cultural policy researcher, Finish)

In this scenario, performing artists are expecting and willing to engage in mobility throughout their career, whether to do part or the whole of their studies; take up training; engage in established groups and/or temporary projects abroad; or touring internationally. This flexible approach towards work, not valuing job security but having a long-term view over one's career has been traditionally associated to arts careers and nowadays intensified and linked to mobility.

The fact that dance and music are considered “universal languages”, has also contributed towards the higher internationalisation of these art forms, both at the production and the dissemination sides. On the other side, language barriers have considerably hindered the mobility of theatre professionals. The use of text as main working tool has made actors feel less at ease performing in foreign languages so their

propensity to move to integrate foreign companies or to tour abroad has been lower¹⁰⁰. Consequently audiences are also less used to attend performances in foreign languages.

Nevertheless, the European arena is gradually prospective for theatre too judging by the increasing number of transnational artistic teams, plays touring around Europe, and number of students making their studies or a part of them abroad. The following theatre administrator exemplifies how the scene in Finland is becoming more international despite language hurdles, especially as there are other professional occupations on the move, not only artists:

We have foreign professionals in directing, set and costume designing and in the technical side, as light and sound experts.

(theatre administrator, Finish)

On the acting side (Chapter 6 “Lost in translation at the backstage” and “Resistance and breakthrough of languages on the podium”), even though Finish is not spoken outside Finland, their Estonian neighbours are already taking advantage of their language proximity:

We have actors from Estonia in music theatre and even in drama that learn how to express quite easily in Finish. Even if they do not understand a word, they manage on the stage.

(theatre administrator, Finish)

Thus many theatre professionals are also developing aspirations to be mobile and work across-borders as individualisation and portfolio careers are also a reality for this discipline. This is particularly the case for the young generations, from which many wish to study abroad; for those artists engaging in a more physical theatre making less use of words; or even for creators investing in multilingual artistic processes and pieces.

¹⁰⁰ Theatres with resident companies have traditionally a lesser propensity to move due to the high financial costs of displacing such heavy structures. Yet, nowadays there are less of these permanent structures, even in national theatres that opt to work with freelance artists in a project basis.

Actually foreign languages act as an overall gatekeeper conditioning decisions and directions (referred before in this chapter “Away from peripheries into central urban hubs”). Two Eurobarometer surveys held in 2006 and in 2010 (EC, 2006b and 2010b) indicate that around 50% of the respondents refer the lack of language skills as a major obstacle when considering mobility prospects. Studies on cross-border daily commuters also corroborate this deficiency (MKW Wirtschaftsforschung, 2009), despite the assumed geographical and cultural proximity of those working and living by national borderlines. In the arts field too, despite the above discipline differences, lack of language competences operate as a barrier to mobility as referred by the literature¹⁰¹ and reaffirmed by the experiences of different performing artists (developed in Chapter 6 *idem*). From being able to address a potential founder to interact with a project partner, to follow a course or participate in a meeting abroad, languages command interferes with the type of aspirations developed and pursued. In this respect, some artists consider mobility as a way to precisely learn and improve their language skills.

Besides initial education, learning remains a common push factor for mobility whether in formal or informal settings. Artists may look for new techniques, concepts, working materials and processes. Learning opportunities can be found in formal education and training, but also just out of working along with those recognised and prestigious, as this dance manager phrases:

Mobility is about being able to work along with the best wherever they are to be found.

(dance manager, Greek)

Working experiences in different countries and within multicultural teams provide the scenery for the enhancement of informal qualifications and competences. For professionals, mobility itself is seen as a powerful learning experience with a great valuing potential for their careers and their life in general thus converted into a lifetime aspiration (Pacte-CNRS and Deusto, 2010). The next EU administrator gives account of potential learning benefits of mobility promoted through EU programmes for lifelong learning (Chapter 2 “Unaccomplished single market”):

¹⁰¹ MKW Wirtschaftsforschung (2001); Audéoud (2002); ERICARTS (2008); ECOTEC (2009).

The fact that you face new obstacles, learn a language, get into contact with another culture and working environment, makes you better prepared for changes, more flexible and adaptable.

(EC administrator, Belgian)

Geographical and job mobility is encouraged for giving extra dimensions to the curriculum of individuals thus increasing their chances for more interesting work opportunities. Moreover the personal side is also considered to be highly at test, especially in intercultural experiences where one may gain awareness not only of the other but also of oneself (Chapter 6 – “Building up relationships at a distance”), as pointed out in the next quotation from a theatre pedagogue:

It is very interesting if cultures mix because you are confronted with different aspects, ways of looking, behaviours. This is effective exchange and provocation of your inner system.

(theatre pedagogue, German)

According to this artist, mobility may stimulate individual personalities by broadening horizons and improving perspective taking while facing new situations and obstacles therefore it is interesting for the arts. This learning potential fits both, arts expectations, as well as political and economical that require lifelong learning attitudes from individuals. Yet these benefits imply a permanent increased effort from professionals, notably combining work with private and family responsibilities as well as holding adequate resources to invest on training. Artists need to be constantly ready and fit to engage in new mobility experiences and pay its costs.

Confronting one’s work with new audiences across borders is one of the strategies used by artists for continuous learning. National markets have hardly the dimension satisfactory for the development of contemporary performing arts that need to extend beyond a small group of professionals and interested audiences (see in this chapter “Looking for larger and structured markets”). Meeting new publics through touring or participating in international artistic projects is a crucial way to mature creations and productions. This aspiration concerns the increase of the number of spectators but also its diversity. The more a piece is confronted with different publics the more it is

exposed to many interpretations and its potential explored as argued by this choreographer and manager:

Performers that do not meet new audiences cannot progress. It is part of our development process to present work to diverse audiences.

(choreographer and manager, Austrian)

Different perspectives and understandings of a piece can help professionals, from technical to artistic aspects, to precise and enrich their work, as communication is an important aspect of art processes.

In most national markets shows usually have a very short life reduced to three or four repetitions, unless the country displays a structured network of active venues. In all cases more than economical gains, professionals emphasise artistic benefits, as they consider touring and performing across-borders a vital mean for overall development and learning. In fact, international touring and collaborations is extending the survival of shows and along side maintaining project and their participants going but hardly bringing profit (over the costs). A cultural policy analyst confirms:

The motivation of participants in international projects is often much stronger than their rational calculation of labour invested vs. remuneration received.

(cultural policy analyst, Serbian/Dutch)

Accordingly there is often the need for specific subsidies for an artistic project to tour abroad, for a venue or festival to receive foreign pieces or for international artistic team to come together and create. International co-productions are also a mean to share resources and benefit from economies of scale. It is an investment in artistic development as well as cultural and social capital for professionals and audiences.

Simultaneously and once more besides market and discipline demands, performing artists have been developing diverse aspirations for connecting to other professionals across borders. Aspiration to meet peers abroad might concern finding soul mates and even looking for self-confirmation or recognition as many artists feel isolated in their regions or artistic intents.

This Turkish actor born and living in Germany exemplifies:

I do not find a place within theatre here, no groups I wanted to work with, as I am always engaged to play the foreigner or the emigrant. I needed to meet people outside to find common interests and then work together.

(actor, Turkish)

The following performer, who has studied visual arts but works within dance, claims as well the same urge to move out:

My need is different than dance purely. I have another way of telling stories. So I could not find my working partners here, as the community is rather small. I had to look for people alike or that were interested in transdisciplinary practices abroad.

(performer, Swedish)

Integration and identification with the community at national or local level may be complex when profiles are less common, because of different education paths or cultural origins.

On the other side, connecting with others is also a way to feel recognised, especially since performing arts milieus are very incipient in some countries or regions as in the south of the Mediterranean, lacking structure, a social status, a supportive policy or audiences:

I feel isolated and without sense home, questioning myself often “Am I an artist or not?”. Many times I am not even paid. When I travel to participate in a festival, I feel identified among peers.

(theatre maker, Tunisian)

Meeting other professionals personally also eases the development of future joint projects whether for artists, producers or directors, thus the interest in attending different international forums, meetings, festivals and seminars. This performing arts

producer from Germany values meeting peers for the sake of developing personal contacts that often lead to joint projects:

It is so much easier to produce together afterwards. Last summer we had a tour in Paris and I visited several colleagues that I had met at a network meeting a year before. With some of them the relationship continued and now we have a two-year project. I saw the place they work I know what the facilities available are, I trust the persons, it is now easier to realize what we can build together.

(performing arts producer, German)

Professional and social networks have been serving as platforms for meeting, sharing and inspiring future common mobility experiences. In the framework of these organisations' regular gatherings in different European locations, professionals look for inputs and stimulation. These events may serve for artists to find partners for future collaborations, but also to promote, sell or buy works to tour.

These meetings are ideal occasions to get up-to-date information on the sector's trends, development and opportunities as they function as pools of human resources since every participant brings out information from different institutions, regions and disciplines. The following theatre interpreter and manager tells her personal expectations towards one of these meetings:

I am searching all the time so I like participating in networks' meetings, to feel the mood between those who travel the world and get inspired.

(theatre interpreter and manager, Polish)

Aspirations to encounter others are due also to the need to discuss, confront problems and look for solutions together. This next theatre manager describes the benefits of discussing with fellows:

By having conversations on how others do their work, what they are developing, what obstacles they face, I get ideas and solutions to apply on my own dilemmas. It gives me strength when hearing other people's experiences, we realise we are

not the only ones facing trouble or doubts. I also can help others with my own stories.

(theatre manager, French)

These gatherings and joint projects are gradually clarifying what the advantages of reflecting together and joining forces. Sharing followed by cooperation, are actually the first steps towards the strengthening of a community of interests and practices (Schirky 2008). When cooperating individuals develop the sense of group identity.

The pulverisation of the sector in individual self-employed artists and their small and micro organisations intensifies this need to join efforts when operating at the European scale. Professionals have increased difficulties in the immensity of the international market and recognise they hardly make it by themselves in what concerns gathering adequate resources, material and in terms of know-how, but also in the prosecution of their own creative and working processes.

This current appeal of artists to collaborate and share creative processes, notably in contexts of mobility and international residencies, is closely linked to the needs referred previously of overcoming national markets limitations and facing together the dimension and challenges of the European market, benefiting from economies of scale. Yet a myriad of additional aspirations connect to this interest for collaboration across borders. After some experiences abroad, this dance creator realises the importance of being with choreographers from other countries:

I discover the pleasure and interest of collaborating with people that are not from my own “world”.

(choreographer, Portuguese)

This testimony reveals how the joint exploration of discipline and cultural differences and also dialogue among participants in an artistic process may become the theme or engine for the creation itself. At the same time, despite possible relational and communicational barriers (discussed further on Chapter 6 “Learning the hard way”), she felt enriched in the confrontation with different ideas, techniques, methods, visions of work and the world.

The manager of an arts venue in Berlin observes a turn towards guest studios and artists run spaces opening their doors to artists from other countries:

Several Berlin based artists have guests from other countries to develop collaborative projects. Some only want to have people in to meet and have new contacts for the future. Others invite artists to work on a specific project because they match. They might share the same ideas or have common goals.

(arts manager, German)

These processes result in part from the fact that artists are more connected and in touch with each other, thanks to the use of digital communications and participation in formal and informal platforms and networks. Through these media they end up conceiving common projects by varied affinities and identities, going abroad to join others and forming temporary units to create together (Klaic, 2007 and Uzelac, 2011).

These temporary consortiums might result of a co-production scheme to produce a piece to be performed and toured throughout the venues and festivals engaged. Yet these gatherings do not always aim at presenting products and can also just constitute reflection, discussion or experimentation moments. It happens also that artists come together in a very informal basis, and engage in temporary projects that are more directly tuned to their personal artistic interests. Artists particularly express this need when under permanent engagements within established groups. A symphonic orchestra administrator confirms this trend in its music scene:

Even in classical music, if you want to play baroque opera or a specific oratorio, you gather a group of musicians and you make a freelance project.

(orchestra director, Finish)

In his view, when integrated in long-term ensembles, as symphonic orchestras or national theatre' companies, artists hardly fulfil their individual questions and expectations. To “do their own artistic thing” they need to build up parallel projects with colleagues with whom they identify mostly or share common interests within the common portfolio career logic. A great deal of these projects is of a temporary sort as

the professionals involved have all different jobs or projects and would be difficult to gather them all in the long run.

These temporary artistic teams often join professionals from different backgrounds, countries and disciplines constituting privileged spaces for interaction, confrontation and hybridisation (Chapter 1 “Open, diverse and prototypical character”). Many artists find this cross-fertilisation of themes and working methods to be challenging and able to nurture new questionings. This dance producer reinforces this idea:

I find more interesting when there is a combination of different art forms and languages. When dancers and actors both work together in a show we may observe that it evolves towards a more physical theatre or takes dance towards performance art.

(dance producer, Danish)

These practices may also connect different artistic communities that traditionally worked apart. In this respect the use of digital communication tools might be contributing to facilitate these crossing of boundaries between different artistic communities too (Chapter 6 “Networking through the information maze”). These interrelations are de-territorialised as clarified by Martin-Barbero (Onghena 2008: 198) that calls it a “*deep-seated reorganisation of relations between cultures and countries through a de-territorialisation that hybridises culture*”.

However it is a gradual process as demonstrated by the subsequent dance creator and director who is promoting interdisciplinary encounters in order to break the isolation of the different artistic communities:

I want to expand our borders and create an open common space. Communities are very closed and do not exchange to know what the others are doing or to go beyond their own problematic.

(choreographer and dance centre director, Romanian)

These initiatives allow the sector to progressively join forces across disciplines and artistic communities as well as national borders, building up communities that share interests and then practices. This attachment goes beyond people to relate also to

territories and cultures. It means going beyond the artistic field to find themes and questions in the “outside world” and then give a personal response through art.

In this process artists end up feeling moved by the different realities they get into touch with. The subsequent quotations highlight how artists absorb and integrate what they experience in loco into their own works. Firstly, this performer tells how being in a new environment may allow new visions:

It is inspiring for creativity to be in another surrounding. You have less day-to-day commitments, so you can have eyes wide open to observe differently, take things in, reflect and build up a response.

(performer, Irish)

A coordinator of a performing arts network reinforces this argument:

Mobility offers a view into other realities changing ability to perceive in different ways, opens up, sensitises you. Artists therefore may gain new inspiration and develop further their language. In this way they may also operate as sensors showing their audiences other worlds through their work.

(performing arts network coordinator, American-Belgian)

This statement also shows the fact that artists may act as “depicters of reality”, by portraying their experiences of the world in their works and share them with audiences (the same argument used by the EU to promote artists mobility in view of the development of the European cultural dimension: see in this chapter “Being driven by subsidies and politics”).

In this respect, the next dance creator shares her plans to explore her artistic work in other ways than the mere entertainment and arts circuit. She aspires to have a political voice associated to an educational role:

Art might have an important role in societies and we bare the responsibility of letting it be understood and appreciated. International circulation is quite stimulating in this respect because it allows awareness of other social and

economic realities. I would like to invest in pedagogical approach, so I can get involved in education and audiences development.

(choreographer, Portuguese)

In the same way, many other artists have been prone to develop projects that are community based and/or social or politically engaged, as the following residence programme administrator describes:

Some artists believe backgrounds feed their work. They are inspired by the milieu where they integrate, their interactions with local population, their perception of a specific society and economy.

(arts residence programme administrator, French)

Artistic themes get more openly influenced by political, social, economical and cultural agendas result of international residencies and cross-border cooperation experiences. This same professional explains a bit further, as he reflects along on the potential consequences of these new artistic aspirations:

This generation is breaking with traditional proposals, so we cannot find them in museums or contemporary art centres. They are not necessarily interested in the Palais de Tokyo¹⁰² or national choreographic centres, but other types of locations. They abandon these places to go out in search for meeting people and new situations. This purpose redefines completely what a residency and what art might be.

(arts residence programme administrator, French)

Yet these artistic aspirations and trends are not only provoking changes to the way arts management and policy makers may envisage art, but they are also themselves a result of policy and funding schemes that have been promoting artistic mobility and cooperation in conjunction with territorial regeneration and social cohesion (in this chapter “Being driven by subsidies and politics”). So aspirations for mobility are a result of mixed causes and interdependent influences that have territorial features as the

¹⁰² Palais de Tokyo is a contemporary art centre located in Paris, France.

background, touch economical and political frameworks and get translated onto artistic expectations and outputs.

6. LEARNING THE HARD WAY

Lost in translation in the backstage

Art is considered to be all about communication. Yet the performing arts, in most cases collective enterprises, are anchored in relational processes both on the podium and at the backstage. Under the spotlights stage professionals convey stories, ideas, concepts, beliefs, emotions and all sorts of meanings and symbols. Whether in a group or solo, making use of text, the body or instruments, verbal and non-verbal communication is their intrinsic working tool.

On the other side, the work in the backstage too requires interaction and negotiation between the different team members. In fact, before a performance comes to life in front of an audience other events and participants have also “came into the scene” to make it possible. The full artistic process¹⁰³ comprises main momentous such as conception, production and dissemination and this complex chain requires communication skills of very different nature.

Communication in the mother tongue and in foreign languages comes first in the list of EU key competences for lifelong learning (EC, 2007a). Communication literacy refers to the ability to express and interpret in both oral and written form via listening, speaking, reading or writing.

Cross-border artistic practices in Europe demand increased relational competences, including expertise in foreign languages, most especially the command of English as a common tool. Artists progressively need to articulate and improve their ability to jump from one language to another within their working processes. Even in cases when mobility is mainly virtual, limited to the use of ICT for creating, making contacts, looking for partners, founders and information. In addition, art works are also travelling, requiring communication competences and putting into cause linguistic and cultural borders. This corollary is particularly crucial for theatre professionals as their use of text

¹⁰³ Becker (1982) and Bourdieu (1992 and 1993).

and verbal communication is higher. On one side the mobility of theatre plays claims for foreign language competences from audiences, on the other side it also challenges professionals to communicate via theatre in brand new ways.

From the very beginning at the conception phase, the search for funding and production means brings about the need to express clearly in written and orally one's ideas. Creators themselves, their managers or producers need to: fill up application forms; present their profile, careers and artistic projects; draft projects descriptions and communicate them to potential founders, co-producers, programmers and other partners. When deciding what projects to support, a jury member of a mobility fund considers the ability to express plainly in the written form crucial:

We come across many grant requests that show difficulties in explaining concepts and intentions.

(fund coordinator, Macedonian)

In the selection processes, the jury comes across ideas, themes or profiles that seem interesting, in many cases apparently relevant for their call for proposals, yet when dossiers are poorly written – *“sometimes with unreadable parts”*-, they tend to reject them. The fact is that the members cannot fully understand the objectives or methods projected therefore they are not able to evaluate its feasibility or adequacy in relation to the fund purposes.

When communication is due in a foreign language, more difficulties may arise. Language competences act as “gate-keeper” to an effective and fulfilling participation in the European multilingual market. Without the adequate command of foreign languages mobile professionals risk throwing away further opportunities and losing a big part of it all. This gate keeping function operates even at the aspirations level conditioning in the first place decisions and directions (Chapter 5 “Quest for inputs and interaction”). Many professionals are not at ease when expressing in another tongue, especially when it comes to writing. A coordinator of another mobility fund this time for the Mediterranean area states:

If an artist has got problems in writing applications or emailing in a foreign language, then will have increased problems in communicating once abroad.

(fund coordinator, French)

This coordinator confirms foreign language competence is an important selection criterion despite the intentions that “artistic value” and “social fairness” should stand out:

We question if we shall also give opportunity to those less language proficient as most artists from this region have little chances to travel. Yet the majority ends up not fully taking advantage from the occasion provided in the way expected. They might see shows abroad however they cannot really follow up and discuss with colleagues. Even if they make contacts, how can they maintain these ties and develop joint projects?

(fund coordinator, French)

The attribution of a mobility fund, for most of the cases, requires that the supported travel shall have longer-run effects in terms of leading to further networking, collaborative projects and/or establishment of partnerships across-borders. In order to match these aims one needs foreign languages competences, from project application to its implementation.

Several other tasks complementary to the development of an artistic process and the maintenance of a career require this communication ability. Ideas and arguments need to be put forward also while creating together within a team. Interaction and negotiations take place in between all the different partners involved in this process, including creators, interpreters, technicians, managers, producers and programmers. Moreover work processes and results need to be presented to the press and critics. Informal and institutional contacts need to be established and maintained, in order to acknowledge and access resources, notably through the participation in diverse networks and organisations. The wide European scene constantly offers new subjects, techniques and opportunities to explore by means of residencies, courses, meetings, workshops and competitions. Again, language abilities are needed in order to take benefit.

Command of foreign languages is important for establishing virtual and physical communication in case of contacts and short-term displacements and travel. While in transit, often professionals make use of a lingua franca in order to get along. English has been establishing itself as the most common working tool in international artistic processes. Nevertheless, in the European context, depending on the geographic and linguistic origins of the participants, the mutual language can either be French, German or Russian, within other more regional possibilities. However when working for a longer period or recurrently within a certain foreign country, artists recognise the importance of speaking the language of the place even though basically. This ability reveals to be essential for their daily practical survival, socialisation and general integration even if not needed directly for one's work. On this subject, an American choreographer resident in Germany affirmed:

The command of the local language is a minimum. Otherwise you isolate yourself, you do not interact as much and as intensively and you do not take the most out of the local scene.

(choreographer, American)

After several years living and working in Berlin without speaking German she finally managed to overcome this hindrance:

Berlin is quite international, I've been working with artists from all corners of the world, so I was managing for years with my native English language. Yet, only now I realise the many opportunities I've been missing. I grasp more accurately what is happening around and direct or indirectly it all feeds my work.

(choreographer, American)

These are the same arguments put forward by a Portuguese tenor working in Amsterdam, another well-known multicultural and cosmopolitan city:

Language is a privileged entry to people's head and heart. We can benefit much more from our experiences in a foreign country if we can chat directly in the local language. Conversations are richer, more detailed and subtle. We feel also more included and therefore happier and more inspired.

(singer, Portuguese)

These different professionals recognise the importance of being familiar with the language of the place they are living in even in the case of very cosmopolitan cities with international labour markets that do not require it for the exercise of their art.

In the case of multilingual creation and production teams, it is a major concern that all members are fluent in one common language. When negotiation takes place across languages the scope for misunderstanding increases. Therefore many professionals claim for this common language need in order to assure certain continuity but also efficiency in the working processes. Many artists, especially those working with improvisation or co-creation processes, reject the idea of working with translations or interpreters. They prefer to establish a single shared common language although in frequent cases the general command might be basic.

Surprisingly a German theatre pedagogue exhorts the advantages of expressing in a language in which we are not proficient:

Communicating about emotions, intentions or movements in another language rather than our native one makes things easier. We feel detached and freer. If people have to listen carefully to understand you because their English is not so good, they also take note more attentively. I have more senseless discussions if I teach in German to Germans, because people tend not to listen properly. When English is a neutral territory for most of the team our work is smoother.

(theatre pedagogue, German)

Uncertainties resulting from a less proficient command of English are this way seen as positive. The reasoning is that the one taking the floor measures and concentrates in every word and phrase, thinking twice before speaking. In most cases they are accompanied by a redoubled attention from the listeners' side too.

This common awareness of the language gaps may favour communication and help to avoid mutual problems: both sides usually have a wider capacity to tolerate mistakes, confusions and misinterpretations, taking comments and questions less personally. Within the same language territory or when dealing with cultures that are geographically close, participants might minimise differences and lose this awareness. This is the argument used by the above quoted artist to explain why she faced more communication related problems while working in her mother tongue.

Moreover, when using foreign languages, some artists might feel more at ease. While expressing in a language that they do not know so well, they might lose the “weight” or value of concepts impossible to ignore in the native language. Having a more fluid and even reduced sense of boundaries and of deeper meanings behind some words, one might be and act freer. This potential is particularly important within creation processes, where one is supposed to overcome limits and build up new possibilities. As the German theatre director, pedagogue and dramaturge expressed, English works out as “a neutral territory”. Communicating through this second language is often more direct and participants might approach more sensitive issues in an easier way.

However despite the advantages highlighted so far, the use of foreign languages in working processes is considered more demanding in terms of concentration, comprehension and understanding. Many times a whole artistic team is expressing in a non-native language, which frequently, turns English from a “neutral territory” into a “no man’s land”, where participants get easily lost. A choreographer that has been creating within international co-production teams expresses this way his experience regarding language:

Speaking a foreign language during a long period of time is tiring. In addition, it can also lead to miscommunication. When you want to say something and do not know how, you lack the proper words and try to find substitutes that might lead to your partners understanding something else. These situations arrive often and in many cases we do not realise at the precise moment when it happens, but only afterwards. Then it gets complicated to go on.... You end up spending half-day trying to clarify these misunderstandings.

(choreographer, Italian)

Poor language competence results in longer working periods and more frequent misunderstandings and potential conflicts, increasing the costs of projects but also the quality of the results.

In effect, some deficiencies in the use of English as a working tool are quite common, even if one's language level is high. The selection of a common language does not ensure that all equally understand words and concepts. There are always words that one cannot recall or emotions too complex to transmit verbally with accuracy. Non-native speakers are often confined to a narrow set of vocabulary. Many times one might need to make use of a third auxiliary language to help out when some words are missing. These "short cuts" lead often to more misinterpretations. Different accents and versions of what some call "Globish"¹⁰⁴ are also difficult to follow. When the command of a language is poor and speakers lack experience, they might also tend to feel shy, insecure and less likely to participate (not necessarily freer).

In addition, communicating in between cultures implies facing not only different linguistic codes but also different communication styles whether verbal and non-verbal. Communication does not exclusively depend on language as non-verbal aspects may reinforce what is expressed verbally or in some cases even (apparently) contradicts it. Cross-cultural communication relies a lot on non-verbal features such as body language, eye contact, gestures, appearance, and dressing codes, among others. Yet, we face these differences not only across language groups or nationalities, but also transversely spanning different regions, ages, social classes or individual personalities. A choreographer with long experience of working within international ensembles and projects refers to paralinguistic features such as pace, intonation, rhythm that also play an important role in deciphering and interpreting verbal communication:

The communication problems I face within working sessions do not really only come from language; they are more related to the ways people say things and position themselves.

(choreographer and manager, Romanian)

¹⁰⁴ Subset of the English language that is the common ground that non-native English speakers adopt in international contexts.

Yet when a team is together for a longer period of time, members have a propensity to get to know each other, develop trust and relax thus communicate more at ease. Usually, this lingua franca evolves by being recreated by the team itself that appropriates and adjusts it to its own needs and features, regardless of the official grammar and rules. Nevertheless, members need to be permanently aware of these communication barriers thus pay special attention to be as most accurate as possible, talk clearly and give time and opportunity for clarifications. On the other side, they have to listen carefully and attentively too. A theatre maker who often creates and produces his work internationally clarifies:

We have to be clear on what we want to say and what our point is. We might have to insist and be ready to repeat when we notice some strange faces. Above all, we should not question our partners' misunderstandings and take all reactions as a positive input and genuine interest.

(theatre director, Swiss)

These multiple perspectives reveal that the use of foreign languages in the context of mobility might not require proficiency, still communication and foreign language competences are crucial and might determine access, effectiveness and quality of working processes. Thus many professionals insist on the importance of English learning adapted to arts education.

As a matter of fact, when analysing backstage working processes this competence need spans the different performing art disciplines including dance, music and theatre even though only the latest has been considered to be problematic in this respect.

In the field of theatre, when it comes to the offstage, it is commonly accepted that technicians and even directors might express in a foreign language in the course of their work behind the scenes. A theatre manager tells about the Italian case that may reflect other European countries too:

For technicians language is not an impediment because English is common in this metier. In the case of actors, if they do not speak Italian there are hardly any possibilities in our market. But with a director it would be acceptable. It is

common to invite theatre directors from abroad when their work is considered interesting and in tune with a venue or group philosophy and aims. When they are not willing to communicate in English that they usually do, they can use interpreters.

(theatre manager, Italian)

In the backstage, while rehearsing, building up or marketing the play, languages know-how becomes increasingly important in theatre too. Lack of language competences might extend costs and influence efficiency and reach of a production. In this context, a performing arts programmer advances:

The internationalisation acquired in contemporary dance it is currently starting up in the theatre field too.

(performing arts programmer, Belgian)

Therefore, theatre professionals are also engaging in European organisations and establishing contacts beyond borders as formal and informal networks are the structure that allows this internationalisation in the first place. These international contacts are quite demanding on communication and relational competences as well as foreign languages too.

In what comes to the back scenes in the dance and music fields, language was never said to be an obstacle to these artists' international mobility. The experience of a manager working in The Netherlands confirms:

Our national company speaks in English everyday even though many of the ballet dancers live here for years. When we make information material on regulations for these professionals, we do it in English and Dutch.

(dance manager, Dutch)

In actual fact, many international dance and music companies and orchestras rely on an average knowledge of English as a basic common communication tie between them all. A dance producer highlights that English and movement can work out well:

People in the dance world are in general fine with English. If the aim of each task is clear to everybody, choreographers and dancers work more with movement and by doing rather than speaking.

(dance producer, Danish)

Yet even when bodily or instruments' expression and practice take the lead in working processes, misunderstandings and other obstacles to an effective communication can happen quite frequently. A musician describes a multilingual orchestra rehearsal:

When some musicians do not understand English, working sessions become confusing and take much longer. Whenever the conductor says something, some musicians start asking "whaaat?". Then colleagues try to help and translate it into a myriad of different languages and even the simplest command takes ages to reach all. This disturbs concentration. It is like working in the Tower of Babel.

(musician, Hungarian)

This basic demand of English competences might be sufficient for the case of dance companies and music ensembles that follow a classical repertoire and techniques and have a hierarchical division of labour. In these cases the final product is known and the different tasks and relations are defined. Yet for artistic teams working in participatory co-creation processes, language acquires an unexpected importance even in fields where the instruments or the body should be the ones to speak out. In addition, when teams are working in a temporary basis, communication needs get intensified.

A professional responsible for programming and producing many artworks insists that verbal language becomes more important to the fields of dance and music nowadays in the backstage:

Shared creation has made language and communication essential and put into question the myth of the universality of dance and music. The different professionals need to interact during the creative processes. The body or musical instruments are not enough as communication means within the team.

(performing arts programmer, Belgian)

Contemporary creation processes tend to be non-hierarchical, transdisciplinary, but also experimental, where attention given to the process itself is as high as to the result. In these cases, language is clearly one essential working tool. Participants need to express their ideas, discuss, argue, confront each other, take decisions and justify them. For all these activities, they need to talk, even if at the end the result will be just pure movement or sound, making no use of words at all.

In this sense, communication and foreign language abilities become increasingly important for contemporary performing artists while mobile. In actual fact relational skills and the quality of English spoken in the backstage can influence the effectiveness of working processes but also outcomes. This way gradually mobility is provoking changes to professionals' profiles and to art works. So these competences come under the spotlights and into the scene and become crucial for all professionals involved but for audiences too.

Resistance and breakthrough of languages on the podium

Everything in performing arts is exportable and importable except language. When language is sang it is not a problem. Yet with spoken theatre mobility is harder.

(theatre network coordinator, Dutch)

This quote from a theatre network coordinator insists on the particular character of this discipline within what is perceived as a potentially mobile field. Theatre is less actively present in the international scene. Language has constituted a huge barrier to these professional's mobility, as verbal communication has been their main raw material from conception and rehearsing processes to the final show. This fact has been neglecting the need for foreign languages competences as actors or plays were not supposed to intermingle or cross national frontiers.

Yet music groups and individual singers from all types of music styles tour the world without any language barrier. The same happens with big musical productions, especially as many are spoken in English. Not only they hire performers from different

nationalities and language groups but they also tour easily. Yet they profusely make use of singing and music. Nevertheless, often these big musical productions are adapted to each national market, translated to the local language and reinterpreted by a national cast.

The real dilemma is confined to spoken theatre and to the stage. An actor having an accent is not easily accepted unless the character to be played is a foreigner itself. This issue seems to be a “no end street” to many professionals and spectators. That is the experience of a Finish actress that lived and worked in London:

When I arrived, the big difficulty was language. I remember my English was so bad that I did not have the words to express myself in improvisations. Only amateurs accepted me.

(actress, Finish)

Working in these amateur companies mostly constituted with English native speakers helped her to improve language skills. Yet language remained a halt to try further during her first years abroad.

Unexpectedly, almost a decade afterwards when she tried to make the journey the other way round, she encountered again the same type of obstacles:

I had an accent in Finish. I was looking for the right words. I was not fit. I did some funny mistakes. It hindered me from getting acting work, because agencies in Finland would tell me they could not cast me because I did not sound Finish. It was shocking to hear. In London they used to tell me I had an accent on my English. So they could not cast me as an English person. So I was never right anywhere. It affected my confidence a lot. Now I sound Finish again, but people might still realise from my speaking that I was away for so long.

(actress, Finish)

Language results in a two-folded affair leading to actors feeling foreigners abroad but also in their own native homeland and mother tongue. Being abroad for a long period can affect language skills, even when you are a native speaker.

When professionals are not fit enough with their working tools they see their employability quite reduced. A dancer needs to permanently exercise its body and keep in shape. A musician is expected to maintain a daily contact and practice of the instrument it plays. In the same way, an actor is requested to practice its language frequently to keep it fluid and updated. This is harder when living abroad and having to express in a different language. The following theatre pedagogue recalls the difficult situation of actors in Germany during the period of the 2nd World War when confronted with exile:

A lot of actors wanted to escape as they were not compliant with the regime, but they could not leave their language. At that time this barrier was even stronger.

(theatre pedagogue, German)

However, even nowadays, playing theatre appears to be in general limited to native speakers hindering actors to work beyond their language. At least, it seriously reduces their international opportunities. This paradigm seems to remain as a dogma for several professionals. Another theatre director explains:

If I listen to a classic text in French I do not like to listen to an accent. It is conservative, but it concerns the beauty of the language. Still it is a problem. Even if you learn the language of a country where you live and try to work in the theatre, you will remain an outsider.

(theatre director, French)

Beauty is relative and other professionals may feel differently instead of sticking to this language purity canon that comes also out of the fear that it might not be convincing for audiences when a character is played with a foreign accent.

Yet the following actress adds to the above argument by stating that it is very difficult for a foreigner to embody a character that speaks a language other than its mother tongue:

When you are playing a specific character or historic play, there is also a certain way of being, a musicality, beyond language itself, related to behaviour,

breathing, posture, rhythm, which are very difficult for a foreigner and non-native to grasp.

(actress, Swedish)

In face of the language impasse many professionals take different paths either by eliminating text from their pieces; by mixing many languages on the stage; and working across disciplines and cultures. This stage director, as example, believes in miscegenation:

I am interested in making pieces that carry performers' personalities and cultures. I mix bodies, languages, images, lights, and music. I aim at creating a new common language.

(theatre director, French)

This other artistic director of an international festival and venue refers to the need of:

Questioning our habits, changing tracks, taking different viewpoints in order to challenge artists, audiences and ourselves.

(artistic director, British)

Some approaches question the centrality of the text and the spoken word proposing alternatives. Coming from a country and small language group with great difficulty in exporting its theatre works, an actor living in Denmark gives account of a new potential:

Some groups are doing works that are not so language bound but more physical that gradually raise interest from foreign programmers.

(actor, Belgian)

Now a choreographer in the same wavelength also inscribes its work in a more physical tendency:

My shows are very performatic, sub-theatrical, I inject a lot of energy into them and this overcomes any language barriers that may arise.

(choreographer, Spanish)

In the same line as many professionals defend the use of English as a common working language in rehearsals and offstage, others advocate the use of each interpreter's native language when performing on the scene. In this respect, several multilingual theatre projects (as well as dance groups) making use of text in their shows have been appearing onto the European scenes. The following theatre director and dramaturge justifies this option:

It is very beautiful to work on the stage with actors expressing in different languages. As spectators when we do not understand a language that is being spoken, we tend to listen with more accuracy. We concentrate our attention on what is said; the way is said, we observe in more detail faces and expressions. It is also very interesting as a director to be sitting outside and realise that if the actors involved really embody what they are acting, they communicate across verbal barriers, revealing a kind of a theatrical specific language.

(theatre director and dramaturge, French)

According to this professional, communication on the stage goes beyond the mere verbal aspect to include also gestures, expressions and emotions even when text is being used. In this respect the command of the language(s) spoken is just one mean to understand and interpret an art piece. This statement inscribes theatre into the universal language concept many only attribute to music and dance.

Another theatre pedagogue when working with several languages on the podium claims it is great learning process:

We need to know exactly what we want to express, because we cannot just react to words. Many times, actors are not deeply aware of what they are talking about; they concentrate more on the way they are expressing, illustrating nice sentences that they know by heart. There is a need to go further and express a meaning, a theme, and an idea, get to know in detail and feel what is being expressed. This is more evident when working with different languages.

(theatre pedagogue, German)

This experience reveals how interlanguage practices entail learning from doing, involving many times discarding what has been learnt and taken for granted. This step requires support and guiding but also a huge personal and professional investment that implies other personal competences such as openness, self-criticism and tolerance (developed next in this chapter “Building up relationships at a distance”).

Moreover we tend to listen to people talking on the stage within dance or even music instrumental performances. A dance creator confesses that she likes to experiment with languages within her work though she assumes not mastering in perfection any foreign idiom:

Languages allow me to feel and touch audiences more directly.

(choreographer, Portuguese)

This artist claims the right to talk on stage to approach publics in different ways that pure movement does not allow. In the same line an international programmer clarifies:

Performers have no reasons for being enclosed into concepts or discipline frontiers. They are eager to cross them and take risks. Dancers and musicians (I am obviously not talking about singers) also feel like using their voices to express through words. In the case of multilingual teams they tend to express in their mother tongue, but might also talk in any other language depending on the place they perform, the abilities of the interpreters and the aim, length and demand of the text used. What counts is the message and this is always open to many interpretations.

(performing arts programmer, Belgian)

While theatre field aspirations for mobility are gradually on the rise (Chapter 5 “Questing new inputs and interactions”), this collaborative tendency of contemporary performing arts in general is dismantling classical divisions and differences in between dance, music and theatre. In this journey, professional profiles are changing as other competences and qualifications are required to face defies of participative creation and production practices. Communication and linguistic competences are amongst the most important to be able to conduct an international artistic process from the cradle.

This tendency is necessarily changing the way these arts are envisaged by professionals themselves, and as a consequence, by spectators as well. Therefore art works translate this diversity aiming at communicating across borders. This process is also demanding to audiences as their linguistic and communication skills are also challenged. In this respect there is a huge space for investment in terms of education and audience's development. The more the public is confronted with foreign productions and different languages and provided information to "read them" and contextualise, the more it will likely value and benefit from art works that portray other cultures. Backstage and on the scenes there are new languages being explored verbal, physically and meaning wise. Adding to this development, the use of ICT tools is also taking communication into new paths.

Networking through the information maze

The need for digital competences is nowadays transversal to most intellectual activities (EC, 2007a). It comprises an understanding and knowledge of nature, role and opportunities of information and communication technologies in everyday contexts, from personal and social life to work. In practice it refers to main computer applications such as word processing, spreadsheets, databases, information storage and management, as well as use of internet and communication via electronic media for information sharing and collaborative networking, learning and research.

For performing artists, ICT and consequent digital literacy have become essential to conduct and manage projects and careers cross-borders. In addition, many have been using digital tools as a medium to express their creativity and try out new ways to produce and disseminate their own works (Staines, 2010). The use of ICT and particularly the internet can assure tasks that before would require physical actions, displacements and face to face meetings and consequently would demand more investment of resources. As examples, through the internet, professionals may keep posted of news and opportunities as well as disseminate their projects; apply for funds and grants; search for partners, establish and nurture a network of professional contacts and assignments; as well as schedule appointments, meet and discuss; even search for inspiration, exchange ideas, create and present online.

In this regard the internet can be a powerful tool as it may allow overcoming traditional physical and material conditions to disseminate and access information and knowledge. As an open territory, internet allows space for those individuals and initiatives that offline would have difficulties in finding wide channels of communication, notably those of smaller dimension, less resourceful and/or situated in far-off locations. Moreover, users can reach and choose from a myriad of information sources and providers and get into contact with persons that otherwise they would hardly find their way through.

Yet when discussing the potential of the digital world one has to bear in mind that access to technologies, as users, implies financial and material capacities to purchase and maintain adequate technical means. Secondly, the actual command and benefit from these technologies requires specific and associated competences of communication and strategic sort. Finally, users have also to be flexible and adaptable since technologies are constantly “on the move” as new versions appear frequently.

Access to ICT has been particularly discussed and claimed as a right by many intellectuals and activists. This debate known as the “digital divide” refers to the gap between people with effective access to digital and information technology and those with very limited or no access at all. It is considered closely related to the notion of “knowledge divide” as the lack of technology leads to shortage of useful information and knowledge. Access to ICT depends on a multitude of factors such as education, income, gender, social class as well as geographical location. The United Nations (UN) have been playing a special role in this agenda since 2002¹⁰⁵ when it called for universal access to basic communication and information services.

As a matter of fact ICT access and literacy are essential and an integral part of the ability to engage in mobility nowadays as both are closely linked. In this sense, a coordinator of an international performing arts network defends an extended access to internet in view of enhancing accessibility to mobility:

¹⁰⁵ When the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) first gathered aiming at bridging the so-called global digital divide by spreading access to Internet in the developing world.

I believe it is essential to progress with access to high speed internet to improve access to mobility. Digital mobility is the counterpart of physical mobility as it allows being mobile without moving.

(performing arts network coordinator, American/Belgian)

ICT and particularly the internet permit to work across borders from a distance, at low cost and a lot less harmful for the environment¹⁰⁶. In fact, the worldwide web may act as a linker between ideas and persons allowing encounters, discussions and staying tuned and in touch with the world without leaving home. Professionals can combine both “realities” in view of preparing and getting the most out of their international experiences. However beyond access to these technological means one needs also to be digital literate and both are reliant on the same type of features. The conditions to being virtually or physically mobile span individual educational, social and professional profiles as well as institutional and geographical frameworks. These constraints will be now analysed by observing performing artists make use of digital tools to select and manage information as well as to engage in communities and networks for social and professional purposes.

Nowadays proliferation of digital media has been increasingly associating information management to digital competences as most of it happens in virtual space and/or with the help of ICT (EC, 2007a). Information management refers to the organisation of and control over structure, processing and delivery of information from and to all sorts of sources, providers and audiences.

The European market is a multiple and intricate system of opportunities, rights and duties conjugating different political and geographical levels in which many artists have a hard time in finding their way through. Information is spread in different sources, institutions, languages and channels requiring expertise to be able to select and make it readable (Chapter 1 “Intricate barriers and increasing circulation control”). From local or national perspective, artists look at the EU as an expert’s affair. European labour markets and legislation lack simplicity and transparency.

¹⁰⁶ Staines (2010) and Julie’s Bicycle (2011).

In absence of expertise, social capitals accumulated throughout personal, social and professional paths make the difference in what selecting and filtering information is concerned. Often information is passing on by word of mouth among colleagues and acquaintances. An administrator of a national theatre information centre affirmed that information spreads mostly through networks of friends and contacts and only those who are not connected socially approach formal institutions. Yet being solely reliant on “*what you get to hear from colleagues*” may not be enough according to this expert:

Professionals need to have a panoramic view over the sector in order to better grasp its opportunities. To feed this view they need to conjugate different sources and be capable of managing it all.

(national theatre information centre administrator, Finish)

Information passed on through personal contacts might be quite valuable and rich in terms of experience sharing yet many times they are non-transferable and only accessible to those well connected which might not be the case for newcomers or young professionals. Thus managing information and networking appear this way as complementary competences that each professional needs to develop jointly in order to fulfil its own information needs.

Professional organisations, formal institutions or informal networks, from the national to the European level, have been giving a helping hand by channelling information and knowledge to the sector in view of its capacity building. The same administrator quoted above lists some of the tasks her organisation is asked for:

We act as a contact point. We support artists who would like to come to work and/or tour in our country by giving them an overview of what structures and support schemes exist and by checking institutions and programmers that might be interested in their work. We help them researching and making connections providing them with contacts that they can approach directly so they do not loose time looking for general catalogues and internet resources that are not tailor-made to their specific needs.

(national theatre information centre administrator, Finish)

In this way these organisations have been acting as central nodes to which most of the information arrives but also many requests. These organisations offer informal exchange of information and serve as mediators in the search for partners. Some even run mobility funds and information services through websites and guides that prepare and support travel and mobility experiences.

A responsible for communication of an international performing arts network recognised their difficulty in handling all information requests as there is a lot of unawareness and misunderstandings regarding the European market procedures, opportunities and key players:

Our office was inundated with questions and we did not always know the answers but we often knew who knew the answers, so we thought about having a news portal open to everybody that is a prone to other websites.

(network manager, Belgian)

Indeed many organisations opt to use digital tools to spread their information. Their strategy is to link and point professionals to possible directions, “*to put people on the way to a solution but not giving them the solutions*”. Yet still professionals have a hard time in finding the information they want:

People do not know how to look for things. The website needs to have explanations on overall possibilities of international cooperation so users can try to find their way and take advantage.

(network manager, Belgian)

However most of these organisations can rarely offer personalised services, as most of them are drawn in information but lack human resources to research, explore new perspectives, read through and digest all news and updates in a daily basis. Information management requires specific expertise and permanent dedication as it outdates fast. Yet arts organisations, especially those non-governmental, are in most cases small and fragile in terms of resources, personnel or budget wise, and have a hard time to cope with all information requests. A coordinator of another national information resource centre has affirmed:

We definitely feel that we need somebody only concentrating on this and who is there for our users. Yet this person also needs to travel, meet people and find potential partners and it all goes well beyond our budget.

(national dance information centre administrator, Danish)

Even national governmental agencies, some of them with vocation to provide international advisory, can not handle the permanent flow of information on one side; and then the need to adapt to the particular cases, on the other.

The need for up-to-date information for performing artists at European level spans different administrative, geographical and political levels in parallel with main topics such as: funding, job and training opportunities; national, regional and city profiles; and regulatory issues (ECOTEC, 2009). Each issue requires different competences notably at the information processing level emphasising the need to connect and join up efforts since very few manage to handle with all these requirements, as we will see from scrutinising briefly these main topics.

The ability to organise and manage information in a daily basis allows in due time to be responsive to events, announces, competitions and other calls. As a great deal of performing artists work as freelancers, building up portfolio careers, they are constantly searching for new stimuli and opportunities. Even if they have a permanent job position in a company or orchestra, they might as well look for parallel projects or training perspectives elsewhere. So to be on the look out is part of their work concerns that is highly reliant on information handling competences.

Performing artists look for funding programmes and travel grants to cover costs of attending seminars, meeting their counterparts to discuss, create and produce together, studying abroad or participating in training courses and workshops. On top, they also have an eye open for jobs, residences, touring and co-productions possibilities as well as partner's search queries, auditions' announcements, prizes and competitions and all types of calls.

The responsible for a website featuring information for cultural mobility highlights the search for funds as the main need:

Information on funding is what everybody is looking for. Many artists are asking for guidance and consultancy funding wise. That's the main thing that people go to our website for.

(network coordinator, British)

A coordinator of a residencies network, on her turn, corroborates this idea:

We are constantly being asked about opportunities to work and develop projects abroad. Artists want to know about mobility schemes, venues that can accommodate them, financial support from the different countries.

(arts residencies network coordinator, Dutch)

Artists or experts on their behalf need a strategic eye that is always there for them to be able to grasp potential opportunities for exploring, developing and covering the costs of mobility. Some of these opportunities have a very short “shelf life”, meaning that they are constantly outdated requiring from those interested to be permanently on the watch out. Plus this permanent effort has got costs in terms of time and/or financial and human resources.

On the other side, when artists are poorly informed, they do not find out about mobility opportunities in the first place and are unable to put forward their aspirations and projects.

Further on, if opportunities are taken up, still information remains crucial. In order to work (or aspire to work) in a new environment, to seize the most and to integrate effectively, one needs background information on the place itself and the local performing arts field in particular. Insights on the society, economy and political system, even local language, are also important to get an overall understanding on how to position oneself and our project.

Then in view of immersing in the local scene one should be aware of the particular profile of the country, region or city in terms of culture policy and structure, including current artistic trends, and existing local organisations and institutions. A dance producer explains how he proceeds when receiving foreigners:

When they are not familiarised with the city they feel it as a strange body, our organisation is strange, the system is strange... I need to help and provide information on the local scene, where to go, what is the political and cultural reality.

(dance producer, Croatian)

Still not all artists have the chance of being supported by local producers that may allow them an informed way into the local landscape. Even in these cases, doing their own homework might be of great value.

However all the demands of an international career make it difficult to have time to invest on research and get to know in a more structural way places and partners beforehand, especially if the travel schedule is tight and busy. One needs know-how on how and where to search for this type of information in order to reach fast, effective and reliable results. The internet is full of profiles and data on countries and cities, but one needs expertise to be able to select the right sources, most particularly if targeted to the arts field.

The duration of stay obviously determines the detail one needs to go into in order to acknowledge the new location. Yet even when stays are short, artists admit they only have to gain in getting to know more in-depth places and partners. As a matter of fact this insight might well inspire the work itself as the following choreographer describes by refereeing to the result of a creation residence experience abroad:

We have been influenced by the new cultural set and understanding and the work ended up focusing on this theme.

(choreographer, Italian)

On the other side, awareness and information on the host countries and local partners reveal to be quite important during work processes as unexpected cultural differences might lead to misunderstandings. New cultural and working conditions can also open up room for rather unexpected experiences even conflicts because habits, perceptions, expectations and ways of being and doing differ. A director of a performing arts centre

regularly receiving foreign artists in residences and co-productions elucidates how he deals with the cultural shocks that sometimes happen in between staff and guest artists:

We have to “add subtitles” to some episodes, meaning we have to describe well the situation, what are the (hidden) intentions and expectations behind each act or phrase. The more tools we give for interpreting, the better artists understand and keep up motivated.

(performing arts centre director, Portuguese)

Lack of information and awareness of difference and of the other may delay, increase costs, reduce motivation and dedication or even put in peril artists projects. In this respect, associated with information management competences, also communication as well as social and civic competences such as openness, tolerance and adaptability, are required to overcome potential barriers (in this chapter “Building up relationships at a distance”). These competences, from a more personal and relational order can also be trained and are crucial in order to deal with difficulties coming out of the permanent negotiation of differences when working or living abroad and/or with professionals from other cultural backgrounds.

Finally, in respect to information management, the topic of EU regulations and frameworks acquires special relevance (Chapter 1 “Intricate barriers and increasing circulation control” and Chapter 2 “Unaccomplished single market”). These regulations concern artists as well as other workers and actually any citizen when circulating in the EU. A coordinator of an international festivals organisation observed:

There is not much awareness about EU citizenship and rights. Very few artists are familiarised with EU political debates and its consequences in their daily life and work.

(performing arts network coordinator, German)

From the field, often EU regulations are regarded with defiance, as they seem standardised and disconnected from artists’ interests as they were conceived having in mind other professional needs. A coordinator of a theatre organisation draws an ironical picture:

We don't play such a big role in influencing the policy decision-making like major industries do. So we find some nonsense. Like smoking is not allowed in working environments while in some plays people smoke on the stage. Another example is a safety rule imposing to wear a helmet where it is possible that something falls from above. Yet on the stage there is always something hanging. Exemptions are hard to obtain so most of the times we get informal allowances, meaning in practice we can smoke on the stage bellow hanging devices and authorities will allow.

(theatre network coordinator, Dutch)

However beyond defiance, resistance and the nonsense resulting of some over-standardisations, EU rules might be in many cases useful and favourable to artists living and working cross-borders. Yet only specific expertise can overcome this detachment and allow flowing within all vague regulations and its apparent chaos. In many cases there is a need to challenge national resistances by claiming EU rights as the only way to reinforce and benefit from them. This allegation is only to be done by those informed and confident enough to confront member-states administrations. Misinterpretations and mistakes by professionals themselves, tax or custom officials are frequent and might cost too much especially for those already fragile economically, as it is the case when taxes have to be paid twice (in the host country and back home) or visas turn out to be denied and compromises can not be honoured.

In delicate areas such as social security there is a huge unawareness among artists judging by quoted existing literature, the big number of requests reaching institutional information centres and networks as well as the interviews done in the framework of this research. A singer settled abroad and working in between different countries assumed disregarding how the system works both at EU and national level:

I did not contact any institution. I made a private health care insurance. From my country I brought the E111¹⁰⁷ but I realise from my colleagues that it does not help much.

(singer, Dutch)

¹⁰⁷ Former EU form issued to tourists so to receive medical treatment in another member-state, substituted from 2004 on by the European health insurance card.

Another example comes from an actress coming from Scandinavia that studied theatre and worked as a tourist guide in Prague. This professional had also claimed a EU health insurance card before travelling yet complained: “*the card only arrived at the end of my stay*”. In addition, she did not manage to obtain unemployment benefits in the host country neither when back home:

When I lost my job in Prague I did not get any social security cover there. All the papers were in Czech and no one was able to speak any other language. Once back home I could not prove I had worked. I regret not knowing how to deal with bureaucratic schemes and not being able to plan ahead.

(actress, Finish)

From these testimonies we realise that these two artists are not fully aware of their legitimacy to claim the transferability of their social rights regarding health and unemployment benefits. Both have tried the system out without success, as they hadn't effectively acknowledged it. In these situations we can also notice a lack of information and transparency from the part of their informers as colleagues and public administration officials were not able to put them in the right track. This fact is paradoxical because social security is supposed to be an essential issue for these professions for whom the risk of injuries is high and careers are still life-short.

As a matter of fact, many got used to work without a safety net by making their living bearing no adequate social status to their specific working features. This fragile condition is their reality at the national level¹⁰⁸. So, going to the European arena does not imply any extra concern to most of them, especially if overwhelmed by dreams of higher income, international recognition and prestige. Yet they become more vulnerable while crossing borders, as it requires increased expertise in order to survive. For a great deal of these daring “trapeze artists”, their unstable social condition gets amplified when mobile. A choreographer illustrates with her own life story example:

I have worked in many places never staying time enough to get into the system and then the work I've done abroad does not count back home, so I am always

¹⁰⁸ Farinha (2003); Capiou (2006); Martinho (2010).

starting up from zero.

(choreographer, Slovak)

As shown by the cases above when artists' tried to hold to their potential EU status, their lack of discernment led them nowhere. In many cases, professionals do not even claim for their rights. But when there are sudden injuries or sickness being informed might reveal quite crucial even in very short visits abroad.

This difficulty to live and work in between different systems reinforces many professional's conviction in a common simplified social security system across Europe that ought to pay more attention to their specific working conditions as demonstrated in several interviews. The same choreographer quoted above argued:

Without more integration all claims for being mobile are a trap and are not rewarding for citizens especially those less protected.

(choreographer, Slovak)

The intricacy of the EU scene and consequent instability for professionals is particularly harmful for those not covered adequately. The next theatre director exposes how official speech is paradoxical in this respect:

The state and the EU incite us to be active and self-sufficient and yet only those employees with a permanent position have acquired rights. I have seen absurd situations of people that had done well with a self-supportive status but end up without any pension or health insurance anyway.

(theatre director, French)

Political and economical discourse that values flexibility, entrepreneurship and mobility of workers is not backed by an adequate social status for those working independently (Chapter 1 "Creative potential to be unlocked").

Actually the disparity of rules regarding labour, civil and commercial contracts to be set during artistic processes and engagements at the European level makes it hard for artists to decipher scope, consequences and implications. In many cases artists opt for "not

bothering” and risk agreeing and signing contracts without questioning for the sake of not losing the opportunity to perform or create abroad (Chapter 1 “Intricate barriers and increased circulation control”).

Yet eventualities might suddenly happen and in these moments, one realises the importance of having the rules clear. The story of the next choreographer without the privilege of holding an EU health insurance card as it is a third country national is symptomatic:

I was in a residency in France and I supposed I would be covered by the host's insurance yet I did not even ask. I also did not think I could fall ill. Unfortunately I did, had to be operated and found out I was not covered at all, so I had to pay it entirely myself.

(choreographer, Croatian)

This case shows how important is to be aware of rules as well as take the time to read, question and negotiate with employers or hosts to preview unpleasant situations. It concerns both parties ability to managing information but also being strategic and plan in advance. Moreover, as non-EU citizens are not entitled to have their social rights transferred, as the case of the Croatian artist, processes are even more demanding. Discriminations may also occur when colleagues from different nationalities are working side by side under different rules and social conditions.

In the territory of visas and work permits requirements, getting the right information in time is critical for whether mobility happens at all for people in this situation, and is especially acute for mobility at short notice, which is quite prominent in the performing arts. Artists need to plan much beforehand and in many cases invest more financially and in expertise, as practical arrangements and paperwork are complex, burdensome and time-consuming.

Visas and work permits related information concerns inundate network's offices and information centres as well as discussion forums in the social networking platforms. When it comes to the field, the artistic director of an international venue affirmed:

Visas and work permits are a big part of our work. Our guests are in and out of the police office frequently. There are always problems for foreign artists to stay here.

(artistic director, British)

This work includes informing application procedures, supporting extending expiration dates as well accompanying police and custom checks. Sometimes visas and permits are simply denied because officials misapply the law - in many cases out of lack of information - even when all correct procedures were taken. In other cases a visa denial might occur due to inability of artists to present the paperwork required and/or in due time. Several interviewees agreed that often refusals happen because of lack of information and last minute applications:

It is the result of absence of organisation, knowledge of the rules and travel experience.

(fund coordinator, French)

Besides the ability to read and interpret information, experience, good planning and time management are also useful. In addition, to have well-established contacts, especially with embassies and authorities or have the support of prestigious institutions can open doors. Again, artists and their organisations need associated strategic skills in order to cope with maze of administrative requests risking seeing access denied or heavily hindered when crossing borders.

The difficulties linked to taxation, notably administration workload to avoid double or excessive taxation discourage working cross-borders or demand greater know-how and information management to overcome them. A music producer and manager working for several groups touring internationally refers that taking care of its artists' tax affairs means several administrative hurdles:

Artists have to deduct the tax when performing abroad and upon return we have to see what we manage to get back. This implies filling in several forms and when travelling to different countries it can go up to ten or more for each of

them. At the end one needs to have tax advisers to do the job.

(music producer and manager, French)

The point is that not all artists and groups are able to afford hiring an expert and in many cases end up losing money, as they do not even manage to claim back what they might be entitled to. As a matter of fact, if one considers seriously before taking up a work assignment abroad the percentage of income and related bureaucratic and administrative expenses that will be taken out due to taxes, probably many would not even dare to go at all. Or then will to keep on moving overcomes financial benefits and is measured more on the personal and artistic level. Nevertheless an adequate financial background is still needed to be able to invest in working abroad.

The issue of intellectual property rights constitutes another field of required expertise. Many interviewees claimed for an easier and more fluent system of copyright that acts as a facilitator and not an obstacle to art productions. Yet the ones supposed to benefit from it all, the artist, in most cases do not even have a clue about their rights let alone be able to calculate how much they might possibly receive. Many confessed not understanding how the system works, as the following performer:

If it happens that I receive something I feel happy, yet, truly, I am not counting on it, and it is too complicated to try to understand copyright.

(performer, Irish)

Finally, in what regulations are concerned, having diplomas and qualifications recognised abroad can also reveal problematic requiring a lot of administrative procedures and planning. To be admitted in a professional trade union the following actress found trouble in getting her studies abroad recognised:

I asked to join the actors union once back home, because I supposed they could recognise the quality of my drama Degree taken in London and give it equivalence. I was absolutely amazed when asked: "What kind of drama school you went in London? You cannot just return and expect to enter the union straight on".

(actress, Finish)

In order to overcome these obstacles one has to be persistent and go through all bureaucratic requirements sometimes even including specific examinations and tests. Yet in this long process many are lost on the way, as they have no know-how or time to invest and prefer to lose some work opportunities.

From funding opportunities to regulatory issues the absence of competences such as information management often associated with strategic planning hinders considerably the mobility of performing artists. While the lack of ability to find opportunities might result in not being able to find any solution at all thus aspirations to mobility are not even nurtured. In the case of lack of know-how of legislative issues it may block a mobility project (when a visa is denied) or make it too expensive (when there is a double taxation) or even risky if one incurs in non-legal actions even non-realising it. Regulatory issues may even influence at the level of artistic decisions in order to avoid sanctions, as the case of labour safety rules.

While moving and working across borders in Europe artists feel like jumping over barriers. On one side, the absence of coordination of member-states policies in all these areas makes portability of EU benefits complex. On the other side, citizens lack responsiveness of their EU rights, as they remain an expert's affair. This absence of citizenship acknowledgment also contributes to delay the progress of implementation itself, as citizens are the ones who may push and lobby via respective civil society organisations for this agenda at the national level.

Acting as mediators, organisations can help performing artists swimming through these troubled waters, but cannot replace their individual research, interpretation, personal contacts and meetings. Networking and benefiting of websites and other information and advisory services is quite helpful, but not always enough to find a specific solution. Each professional's need for guidance is highly personalised and accurate, depending on individual and professional profiles, present projects and future aims. Thus information management is a competence that urges to be internalised by artists themselves whether working on their own or along with managers or even lawyers. Especially as few can afford hiring experts, at least in the beginning of their careers and even if they do they still need to reflect and negotiate decisions taken. Nevertheless staying in touch with other professionals and the sector's organisations as well as making use of digital

technologies are important working tools. In this way, information management competences are complementary to digital literacy but also communication and networking skills.

Networking is today very much associated to the digital world, since the use of ICT has greatly amplified the reach of this form of organisation and competence and totally redefined its role and relevance. Therefore it is often analysed along with other digital competences, as the mixture of information, technical, social and personal network modes is a developing reality. This wide perspective, allows defining networking as an intertwined structure or system of social ties between persons and/or organisations (Chapter 1 “Open and diverse character”). This concept takes us back to Bourdieu (1983: 192) theories on social capital, defined by this author as a network of build-up ties which emerge as the end-result of long-term investments and strategies. In this respect, seen as a capital or a resource, networking becomes a strategic professional tool (Chapter 3 “Resource for the resourceful”).

When considered a competence, networking refers to the ability to act in inter-personal and inter-organisational structures and/or environments. It is understood as a fundamental basic attitude of professional action that entails the establishment and maintenance of a system of formal and informal contacts with individuals and/or organisations and consequent conduction of communicative processes of interaction and/or cooperation of some sort. Its combination of managerial and communicational type of competences makes it tactical for the mobility of performing artists.

At the competitive and complex European level, networking actively is a matter of survival for the pulverised performing arts sector, since “*isolated, they need to connect*” (Bauman, 2004). Networking brings connectivity and allows joining efforts and sharing resources. The flexible use of networks ensures the acquisition of relevant information and other social and economical capitals that are required for remaining up-to-date, responding in due time and benefiting from the opportunities of this market.

A performing arts programmer gives account of the importance of networking for mobility:

Mobility is connected with the creation of a network. Building up and participating in international networks is the way to sustain and develop cross-border creation and production enterprises.

(performing arts programmer, Belgian)

Being able to establish contact with fellow partners and colleagues abroad is essential in order to be mobile as relations lead to mutual acknowledgment and may develop into further joint projects and assignments. Thus artists seek to make acquaintances and reach out to those with similar interests, expectations and/or aesthetics, within or beyond their own discipline. They make contacts via the use of ICT and digital social platforms but also through face-to-face encounters within the framework of a network meeting, a festival, a workshop or a residency. Programmers, theatre administrators, stage directors, choreographers and dancers talk about how they are “*connected with other organisations/individuals/projects of the same kind not officially but just through personal contacts*”. They recognise that personal and professional spheres get mixed in the networking mode as the next performer tells:

Being in close contact with many professionals allows me to find colleagues to work with or venues and co-producers for my shows. If one is not interested, it might well indicate me another one that might.

(performer, Norwegian)

It is also quite frequent to establish close contact to programmers by inviting them to see one’s work in a regular basis and slowly building up informal networks:

Most of our tours come from an international programmer seeing and enjoying our piece and contacting us. So gradually we develop ties with some programmers that I know are interested and whenever there is a premiere, I contact them to send information”.

(choreographer, Swedish)

Many professionals meet up recurrently in the framework of international networks gatherings and assemblies. Participation in these “*get togethers*” is important to establish and feed one’s network. The next statements describe the experience of two

professionals with network gatherings. An arts manager that contributed to the organisation of one of these events, defends:

My institution has been part to the set up of some big networks' meetings in this city, because when we bring a lot of people here that is the first step for the professionals in our country (yet not only) to get good contacts. So we are making possibilities for the whole sector.

(arts manager and producer, Slovenian)

Then, speaking in the name of participants, a theatre actress realises:

I am not a member of any network. I am just about to begin to realize its importance. In this event I met interesting people, not only foreigners also from my own country. I will take contact with some of them in the future as they live near by.

(actress, Swedish)

Being among colleagues from different countries (but also our own) is also inspirational and even empowering for many of these performing artists that are tired of fighting all by themselves and in these meetings they can connect and share concerns and solutions. The practice of networking especially with the help of ICT is also facilitating and promoting the circularity of movements. It contributes to overcome some of the obstacles that the return to one's country used to bring about to all those who remained some years outside:

Now internet makes things easier and we can keep our networks. In the past it was quite complicated while abroad to get into touch with your own country, to find out what was happening, to maintain contacts. Then once back home, all the new contacts made abroad would also vanish.

(theatre maker, Romanian)

This theatre maker with experience in circulating in between different points out how simpler is nowadays to be in and out and permanently stay connected and benefit from networks home and abroad.

This permanent connectivity allowed by the use of ICT and amplified by circular physical mobility is precisely one of the features of what social scientists call transnational communities (Veenkamp, 2007; Robins in Onghena, 2008). In principle, it would diminish brain drain effects, for instance. As professionals even abroad might still contribute to their own countries, notably by working via the internet and travelling back and forth. Freedom of circulation allows individuals to travel across borders, take part of different communities, physical and virtual and accumulate belongings. Veenkamp stresses that participating and hopping from one community to the other is feasible physically but mostly online. Yet it also remembers that this multiplication of identities is highly demanding on competences such as flexibility and adaptability, including ability to speak different languages and being able to interact across cultures. So interactivity may act as an advantage only for those who hold these complementary resources.

A mapping exercise done on how contemporary performing artists are dealing with digital technologies has shown that these tools are opening up brand new horizons for working and networking at the international level, yet face-to-face encounters are needed in order to make them more fruitful and effective (Staines, 2010). Many artists find relevant to make the point that physical mobility is irreplaceable and that electronic contacts are not enough to establish a long-term work relationship. A performer reminds:

Travelling remains quite essential to develop mutual trust and successfully go forward with collaborative projects.

(performer, Brazilian)

A choreographer working in international co-creation projects realised that processes develop slower and more conflicts are likely to come up if the internet is the solely communication tool:

If you are not present physically than the rest does not function.

(choreographer, Spanish)

The same performing arts network coordinator who above quoted praises the advantages of virtual mobility explained in more detail the parallel need for physical mobility so to make a good project of collaboration:

It is important to know who you are working with; what are the concrete conditions; how the audience sees the work; who are they as persons; how you can trust; and this is much easier when you can go there.

(performing arts network coordinator, American/Belgian)

On the podium and backstage, performing arts result mostly of teamwork. Therefore participants need to know each other well, be aware of the location and the scenario where their work will take place as well as be informed about the final recipients of their shows, the public. Communication skills are in this respect very important and trust is affirmed to be as an essential facilitator. Trust was valued by several professionals and exclusively associated to resulting of physical encounters:

There is no substitute for personal contact. Trust is the prerequisite of all cooperation and it only arises from face-to-face situations.

(dance manager, Dutch)

The study mentioned above also provides an interesting quote from van Kranenburg reaffirming that the first approach needs physical interaction to have impact (Staines, idem):

In terms of real work and real change on the ground one needs to look the other in the eye to know if it is good to work with someone. From that moment on things like Skype are unbelievably helpful.

All these testimonies lead back to the idea expressed by several interviewees, such as this network manager when she refers that:

People have got to be mobile before they even think about going anywhere.

(performing arts network manager, Belgian)

Mobility feeds mobility and ICT can facilitate and maximise but doesn't substitute or allow overcoming the need to hold complementary resources. Regardless of the digital revolution, the importance of face-to-face communication has been recognised within artistic processes that result of joint collaborations and co-productions across-border. Many argue that digital communication has been feeding and provoking physical interaction instead of substituting it. Being the "*counterpart of physical mobility*" the internet became an essential tool for mobility and cooperation thus digital literacy turned into a transversal and crucial competence.

However, contacts need to be maintained and nurtured and this requires the combination of other skills and abilities besides networking. Financial capacity, for instance, is needed in order to cover expenses with memberships, communications and participation in events. Many artists argue that they cannot afford to travel all the time to keep on meeting their peers for the sake of keeping the ties solid. The reality is that a great deal of individual artists and/or their micro and small organisations can not include expenses on trips and fees to participate in international networks in their project budget's. At the end, only a small part is organised and actively participates in international networks and from those mostly represent more established groups and venues or festivals.

On the other side, artists also claim that their networking duties hardly fit into their touring or creation agendas and mostly especially reflection needs. Long-term planning and adequate information management skills are also complementary if professionals want to keep up the fast networking pace and articulate it with their creation timing.

Professionals are learning by doing and jointly exploring digital tools and the ups and downs from connecting and networking across-borders for the sake of sharing ideas, resources as well as advocating for their common cause. Networking is quite demanding in terms of competences and resources in fact and only few can afford to master and make it a tool to sustain their mobility. Artists have a hard time in articulating this role with their purely artistic concerns yet again only few can delegate this task to a manager or a producer. Even those would still need to be acquainted with networking at least for the purposes of finding creation partners and projects as networking is not only about fund raising, touring and buying or selling works but also about developing common artistic processes. At the same time, against all odds, performing artists are

rediscovering a sense of community and the fun of working together that individualisation processes translated onto self-employment and the use of digital technologies have gradually shadowed. In addition, this community does not stop at geographical, political or discipline borders and with the help of ICT is slowly putting into question and blurring these established frontiers. Networking is the medium that is connecting them all.

Taking managerial risks

Right after a great idea one needs to turn it into action. Putting thoughts into practice goes further on than purely artistic concerns. The full implementation of an artistic process from conception to dissemination demands associated strategic and managerial logics and procedures.

The sense of initiative and entrepreneurship groups up a set of skills that relate to proactive project management, effective representation and negotiation, and the ability to work both as an individual and collaboratively in teams (EC, 2007a; HKU, 2010). An entrepreneurial attitude is characterised by initiative, pro-activity, independence and innovation. It includes motivation and determination to meet objectives, whether individual goals or aims held in common with others (Chapter 1 “Creative potential to be unlocked”).

These competences are crucial to the development of an artistic career both at national and European level. Yet the wider market incites a more dynamic and strategic attitude to respond positively to its plural and multilayered opportunities but also risks. Moreover when professionals work across borders, they might also maintain their participation in their national and local markets and these parallel experiences amplify the dimension and diversity of belongings and action fields.

Yet many artists lack these types of associated competences transversal to artistic professions. However this need provokes tensions and readjustments in profiles and practices, confronting artists with the need to invest on management when they would rather dedicate their resources to their creative development.

In fact performing artists realise it is insufficient to be solely a creator or an interpreter. In order to make it at the European level they need also to be (or behave like) managers as this theatre director expresses:

It is not enough to imagine and create, one needs to find and convince interpreters, producers, founders and audiences.

(theatre director, Swiss)

A performer advocates as well the importance of being acquainted with administrative, management and production aspects to work freelance:

In an artistic process it is not simply that you come in directly onto the stage and act. There is more to it if you want to establish your independent company or develop your own projects.

(performer, Brazilian)

A performing arts project is a collective enterprise even if we take the example of a solo conceived, performed and produced by an individual artist. The whole process involves different partners and stakeholders demanding considerable planning and negotiation to deal with them all in view of reaching the final objectives.

A dance expert working for a national information centre gives account of the myriad of requests they receive for helping with marketing and applications for travel grants. This professional realises that the lack of expertise prevents many from trying out the European stage:

I know several choreographers that are doing interesting pieces that could work internationally but they simply lack know-how. On the other side, they do not have the financial capacity to employ managers.

(national dance information centre administrator, Danish)

The field of arts management is only gradually getting established throughout Europe yet the lack of financial stability within the independent scene is seldom blocking this advancement. Normally only big and established groups and institutions would be able

to invest in a more permanent basis on professionals such as managers, producers, public relations and accountants.

Yet in absence of these competences artists are most likely to find obstacles that will put into cause the survival of their projects. In some cases they end up to gradually learn the hard way how to adopt a more entrepreneurial attitude. An actress with experience in London gives account of how she has learnt by doing:

All my colleagues were constantly thinking how to make money to do their own shows. It is exhausting, but very forward moving and dynamic. Actors have constantly to hold their craft and to be a businessman in parallel. From then on I am generating and dealing all the time with different things, some have nothing to do directly with acting.

(actress, Finish)

This actress recognises she incorporated a multitasking and pro-active attitude while working internationally as competition is high. She had to permanently train her voice and body as well as develop ideas and conceive projects, find partners, fundraise, map and participate in castings, present and sell her shows. In the beginning, she confessed, she hardly managed all these tasks and missed often deadlines or auditions. Yet gradually from one project to another, she acquired experience and new skills, notably planning, budgeting and marketing. Yet not all independent artists have the cultural and/or economical means to keep on trying the international scene and learn by doing, especially as it is intensively time and energy consuming.

A managerial approach induces a certain dynamic in the ways of thinking, planning and conducting projects and careers. This dynamic perspective and attitude, moreover, implies that artists dedicate a constant effort and focus to their projects and career. While being abroad for work, they tend to leave their private life behind, paying full attention to their professional compromises. A singer working mostly abroad admits:

My working capacity is bigger as I am away from family and most friends. My personal life is put more to the side.

(singer, Dutch)

In addition if work is done in temporary teams and/or in a project basis it also entails a more intensive commitment, as participants have to give their maximum dedication and concentration in a shorter period of time. As consequence the multilayered dimensions and profusion of participants amplifies the complexity of projects and their management. Even when artists themselves are in possess of all this know-how, the multiplication of demands makes it harder to cope. This choreographer and dance centre director makes known his tiredness about the accumulation of tasks:

I do every layer of my working process: project, management, budgets, and communication. It is too much on my shoulders; I feel terrible pressure. I have no time for proper reflection.

(choreographer and dance centre director, Romanian)

On the other side, tiredness, lack of time or deficiency in planning might give place to conflicts as well as influencing the result of the work itself. In fact, participants in a cross-border co-creation project spend little time together, sometimes with long periods of distance in between. Thus they have the need to condense all the process affecting directly the product at the end and challenging their communication competences as well.

Another choreographer having in mind a concrete international co-creation experience - among three different creators from three different countries - denotes their planning troubles and how hectic travelling and consequent stress started to affect their communication:

With this work we spent six months abroad all together within two years. It took quite long to plan and balance our different agendas and none of us had a manager or producer. In the last period we met often yet changed places also often. All the travelling and scheduling was tiring and putting a lot of pressure on us especially as we had other parallel projects running besides our private lives.

(choreographer, Italian)

This dance professional told about their quarrels and misunderstandings when working side by side as their timings were too tight to overcome their cultural and artistic differences in a productive and enriching way. At the end their work toured several places in Europe – as it was scheduled beforehand, yet none of them was totally pleased with the result.

Some other interviewees also revealed how mobility doubles the need for (time) management competences. As it increases pressure to work, it places artists in between different and apparently mismatched demands. Firstly, the need to keep on creating, producing and touring to stay on the scene and survive; then, the wish to take the time to reflect and let their creative drives come out freely. A dance maker and centre director confesses his dislike for this ever-demanding logic:

My life is not an agenda. I work when I feel I have something to say. I need to take my time to reflect and conceive. Yet the market needs fresh new products in permanence.

(choreographer and dance centre director, Romanian)

Artists have to be permanently under the spotlight otherwise they risk losing contracts, schedules, deadlines, contacts and partners. They feel also they need to constantly train their skills to keep updated. Time management and of pressure to produce are fundamental, most especially in a period when common reflection and research are valued. Many have difficulties in coping with long-term and tight scheduling of frenetic international agendas that leave little time for imagining. Another artist, this time a theatre director, gives account of the same aversion yet also fear towards this fast speed:

It is a crazy cycle. Once you present a piece that worked out well, you get asked: “what about your next project?”. And you feel immediately the intention to support you. If you do not have any project yet, you leave the circuit and you risk getting lost.

(theatre director, Icelandic)

Staying on the scene also means financial survival for these professionals as many work in a project basis and have no other means to pay their reflection and research time. In

order to overcome the financial aspect many independent performing artists are joining forces and associating themselves in order to share costs of professional production and management. Competence gaps are then being diminished from sharing know-how and resources within organisations and networks. This way some artists have the chance of working together with specialists in order to try to go forward and in depth with the creation itself. In this respect, mobility is gradually pushing the need to work along with management experts whether including them in the team or in a project or freelance basis. Managerial competences are expected to bring dynamic to many existent artistic resources and projects that would duplicate efforts and get lost when striving alone.

When resources are teamed up and tasks divided, professionals recognise it becomes easier to plan in advance and prepare European collaborations and touring effectively. A performing arts programmer admits the crucial importance of mastering these competences:

We have to create the best circumstances for people to meet and have time to develop ideas together. We have to invest in long lasting contacts and relationships between artists but also managers and technicians.

(performing arts programmer, Belgian)

Mobility and European collaborations require a lot of time and planning as intervenients in most cases do not know each other beforehand and come from different places. Getting acquainted with each other, discussing, experimenting, rehearsing require physical meetings and all associated material conditions, scheduling, booking and travelling demands. On top, participants come also from different cultures, disciplines and speak different languages that all together add extra difficulties to the creation itself, but also the management and production processes, as they all go hand in hand.

Time management becomes increasingly important in order to accomplish deadlines and compromises and still assure reflection, research and acknowledgement of partners. This turns to be even more complicated as many of these projects are developed in different moments in time as well as in various locations. A choreographer demonstrates from her experience of creating and touring along with a dance creator from another country the hurdles of organising and implementing such an enterprise:

The project needed a lot of backstage work that we would not be able to do ourselves if we hadn't production and management back-up.

(choreographer, Portuguese)

This joint project required thorough prior reflection on the work methodology and feasibility: both dancers would need to meet physically in different moments and in different places in order to actually put it into practice. In this particular case, they previewed to work together in each others countries as well as in a third location in order to test perceptions and concepts such as home and identity and its impact on their work. Then the touring perspectives and schedule needed to be tried out and planned. Consequently this intricate artistic process demanded the finding of partners and founders to support it materially and financially. Fortunately the two dancers were working along a team of producers and programmers within the framework of a festival that assisted their moves and co-produced the work.

On his turn, a producer also claims the need to plan well and dedicate time to understand artists and their needs in order to assist them:

Artists need all kinds of things and it takes a while to get to know them and understand their processes and projects so to respond adequately to them.

(performing arts producer, German)

Moreover the above quoted Belgian programmer also defends that “*collaborations and effective mutual enrichment is not done over night*” therefore it is important to evaluate and plan well the feasibility and calendar of each project so to assure good working conditions. Yet financial pressure and absence or incomprehension of management competences might not always allow to “take the time” to judge and prepare freely and adequately every option.

The conduction of such a complex process may lead to divergences between creation and management as these activities presuppose different rhythms and timings (HKU, 2010: 7). As a matter of fact in the performing arts in Europe there is still a difficult relationship between management and the arts. Artistic needs and desires seem not to be easily compatible with bureaucratic and long-term demands of project management and

evaluation, especially those of the international market. Yet these two logics get closely interrelated due to mobility aspirations and practices.

This uneasiness results on one side from the trouble artists have to hire these experts and secondly to collaborate with them. Persists among several artists certain reluctance to share the creative process out of fear of not being able to conciliate different interests and scheduling.

The following choreographer and interpreter admits not being able to assume all demands of her own artistic processes out of risk of losing energy for the creative share. Yet searching for an expert remains a problematical step because she fears:

Managers may not understand my language and try to interfere with my work.

(dancer, choreographer, Slovak)

The tension between the creator of a cultural work and the entrepreneur is often reflected in the desire to prioritise the cultural value of the creation with little motivation for generating economic value (creation-oriented), while the entrepreneur will be expected to prioritise the economic exploitation over its cultural value (growth-oriented) (HKU, 2010).

This squeamishness to share the creative process with a business orientated professional is originated from the idea that both worlds do not match and that those who have a demonstrable passion for the arts are not capable of adopting a business like attitude. In the view of the following artists and producer the traditional idea that it is nobler for everyone to survive on crumbs of funding rather than nurturing the best possible environment for artists to create work still persists. Yet he believes:

Producers or managers are also in the arts field for passion. They have also to be creative in their work. We need to build mutual trust so that we can work side by side seeking the same visions.

(dancer, choreographer, producer, Belgian)

This professional feels there is a need to break opposing dichotomies such as art or passion versus business as they make no sense nowadays. In the current climate, he

argues, there is a growing need for organisational energy, corporate skills, original ideas and a willingness to take risks in the same way as for creative energy.

Many artists, when questioned about risk taking, associate this ability with personal aptitudes such as curiosity and being adventurous. Features like mobility, adaptability, flexibility are considered a matter of individual attitude. Commonly there is a tendency to find that risk is more easily taken by those who have nothing to lose or in the other way round are wealthy enough to try their chances. In what comes to international migration, it is often the explanatory rationale used. Yet one should question this naturalised point of view and instead contextualise it by integrating it in its social, educational, economical, political and cultural roots.

Taking chances is part of life - "*one also takes risks by standing still*" - reminded a coordinator of an international performing arts network (American/Belgian) arguing that risk is not solely linked with mobility options or artistic careers. In fact, risk taking is a requirement of any profession and it defines approaches and methodologies more than activities. Changing jobs, cities or countries are career choices that depend on the way one perceives work and life as well as from the opportunities given by the market and one's institutional context.

Nevertheless, in the case of the arts field, absence of regulation amplifies the need for entrepreneurship, risk and initiative taking, as professionals cannot rely on a structured working environment or social benefits. Yet mobility amplifies even more the costs and risks associated. The ability to take these risks and endow is reliant on financial resources, but also on fund raising know-how, ability to plan and invest, one's geographical location, economical and political conditions as well as cultural features. This scenario places artists in different positions to access mobility by nurturing different aspirations and competences in relation to taking risks.

Holding a certain financial back-up is a considerable factor in what the capacity of an artist to endow is concerned. Holding financial provisions allow investment and long-term planning that is needed for: organising beforehand travel tickets and tours; putting in money to invite or hire; paying visas and translations; forfeiting studies and training;

and advancing cash to start creating and producing before a funding approval or the money granted reaches the bank account.

As a matter of fact, organisational and financial capacities to invest promptly are due also to institutional conditions and to the sector's structure and development. In eastern and central Europe as well as in the south of Europe a structured policy of support to independent initiatives is recent and in many cases fragile justifying some of the increased difficulties these professionals may encounter to master risk and initiative taking. These obstacles, in addition, reflect and reinforce economical and political inequalities as the following experiences of two professionals, one from Portugal and another from Estonia disclose.

A foreign programmer working in Portugal for quite some time realises how minute were organisation and planning competences in this country when he first arrived:

*People did not plan because they could not predict what was going to happen.
Only when your daily life is assured you can start thinking internationally.*

(performing arts programmer, Belgian)

In the last decades the set up of regular and long-term support programmes, the emergence of structures with know-how and international contacts have been allowing the sector to gradually invest with more confidence on its competences to being mobile. Yet many obstacles remain at the material but also competence level not allowing the proper development of trust and initiative¹⁰⁹.

Another example comes from the very northeast of Europe: an Estonian choreographer and producer admitted that inviting somebody to teach or to perform is still scary in terms of administrative, financial and management requirements.

We have to know the rules; make contacts; plan in advance; assure visas and

¹⁰⁹ The constant change of the rules of the Portuguese funding system for the performing arts along with the different Governments, has drawn an unstable scenario that does not favour the full development of the sector capacity building.

insurances; buy trips, ... At the end this is all too expensive and risky for us.

(choreographer, Estonian)

Again, Estonian low income levels regarding the European western average prices up their mobility making their risk higher.

When cultural institutional frameworks and economic environment are less dynamic and/or supportive, artists have to rely on themselves. In this regard their ability to risk and invest is more fragile and dependent on other factors, such as fund raise ability, but also individual financial and cultural background or family status.

Moreover the willingness to take risks and initiative, inherent to be mobile, is also closely linked to political history and culture. In this respect, again, those professionals coming from eastern and central Europe as well as some southern European countries have additional problems, as private initiative and entrepreneurship were not encouraged in their authoritarian political regimes. A theatre director from Romania translates this inability to put forward projects as something against their “nature”:

*We are not used to approach institutions or establish contacts with the exterior.
We are not prepared to propose and to argue. In the past we had no liberty. Now our fears are just cultural.*

(theatre director, Romanian)

Indeed these countries political and economic situations have completely changed since the nineties yet the lack of “*entrepreneurial spirit*” takes longer to be nurtured. The administrator of an international exchange funding programme gives account of how the opening of frontiers and increased contact with the west has provoked a more dynamic attitude in the arts sector from this part of Europe:

Before it was quite difficult to find hosts in eastern countries. Now participants and hosts find each other without our intervention. Participants are more autonomous, take the initiative and present themselves to organisations. Hosts contact us and say: “We have a project and we look for a person with these

skills, can you help us? ". They search for subventions but they propose a project in exchange, they are not simply waiting any longer.

(fund coordinator, Dutch)

Gradually these professionals, especially the young ones, are acquiring specific attitudes and work methods that allow them to play in the international front with a more strategic perspective. Yet the remaining competence gap associated with a less favourable context at the economical and political stake places them behind in what access to mobility is concerned.

However when one masters the ability to fund raise and knows which doors to knock, the capacity to take risks increases. A composer has admitted the usefulness of having failed several fund applications in the past:

I learnt how to do it and now I am more confident to take chances as I can get money from several places.

(music composer, Estonian)

The ability to write applications and fundraise is a very common and frequent task in the daily life of an artist. Application writing is dependent on communication and linguistic competences, but also of managerial and strategic type (in this chapter "Lost in translation at the backstage"). Applicants need to find good arguments and tell a story well told. One has to be informed about rationale, aims and conditions of programmes and funds to be able to justify the importance of its own projects connecting them to overall policy targets and trends. Successful fundraising implies the ability to identify available opportunities for developing projects and activities as well as the right partners and co-founders across borders. Networking is also a complementary competence in this respect. Candidates have also to be acquainted with planning and budgeting, among other skills.

A researcher specialised in cultural funding who studied the participation of arts organisations in the EU funding programmes, notably the Structural Funds, concluded that:

Most of the obstacles in applying to the EU are due to lack of know-how of drafting projects with this dimension and difficulty in finding the right allies.

(cultural policy researcher, German)

All those without experience or skills on project planning and networking may have a hard time in accessing funds that would allow their mobility and cooperation projects.

This was particularly the case for eastern and central Europeans' right after the political changes in the beginning of the nineties. The Budapest Observatory (2004) revealed the weak participation of these countries in the EU Culture 2000 programme as an example of their difficulty in playing the international game. More recently, the same author's (Inkei, 2009) analysis of the culture sector in these countries twenty years after the fall of communism in Europe, showed that the absence of management skills needed for adapting to new market conditions soon began to be addressed notably by training programmes. This report acknowledges that language competences have widely improved, professional contacts have strengthened between west and east and the increased level of mobility brought about the transfer of know-how for all sort of culture operators. Yet it also states that the general level of management is still far from satisfactory particularly in what comes to the average skills and performances in marketing, communication, audience development and fundraising. Some professionals from this region confirm that this know-how is still little. A Hungarian theatre producer lists what is missing:

We still lack contacts, versatility, management and marketing skills.

(theatre producer, Hungarian)

These competences can be acquired by steadily professional training and/or learnt by experience as the case of the Estonian musician above. Nonetheless they are also passed on by socialisation that is strongly connected to national political and institutional cultures. Therefore it is harder for artists coming from countries where policies and institutional frameworks are not favourable to acquiring an entrepreneurial attitude to avoid the vicious circle. The ability to take the risk and invest on mobility results of personal and professional profiles but also of institutional conditions of the surrounding environment. National resistances and non-incentive to mobility act as obstacles hindering the ability to go forward. Competences need a favourable environment to

stream, depending on societal and institutional valuing and circumstances given to mobility.

Actually in a mobility context, artists and their organisations require competence needs similar to any SME's as they face many of the same questions and challenges (also recommended by HKU, 2010). Yet these skills have to be adapted to the particular and fragile nature of artistic processes and works. Some interviewees have given notice of the lack of international management skills in arts curricula and the need to gradually introduce it. A dance teacher and programmer claims:

The arts sector needs training to survive in the international market such as enterprising, managing, and producing. This basic training is also needed for artists who work on their own, not only for art managers.

(dance teacher and programmer, Portuguese)

In this line of thought, a residencies' programme coordinator concludes:

Nobody is born an artist but becomes one.

(arts residence programme coordinator, French)

His organisation realised the need for managerial competences by dealing with their grantees difficulties when participating in international residencies notably regarding project drafting and planning; budgeting; institutional contacts or fund raising. To fill in this gap they have conceived a training initiative to bring in this know-how to young artists so they learn how to manage their own projects and get the most out of their international experiences.

This training aspiration is also confirmed by a coordinator of an international exchange programme that elucidates they receive applications from choreographers, dancers or actors willing to engage in traineeships in another country to take up production or management positions in order to learn these skills.

Even if artists themselves acquire competences and insights of a strategic order, in many cases, they will need to work along with professionals (managers, agents,

producers) not only due to the high expertise required but also because they simply can not cope always with all the tasks of an international artistic career. Mobility in the European stage is generating needs and dynamics of organisation and association as a way to assure a division of labour, through economies of scale that can live up to the demands. Consequently, the need for social competences within cross-border collaboration artistic processes and careers intensifies as well, not only among creators but also across disciplines, professional activities and cultures.

Building up relationships at a distance

Within the various aspirations driving artists to be mobile, some claim that “*the studio of the post-modern artist is the world*” as stated by Haerdter (1996) arguing that art is assuming a temporary and interventionist character (Chapter 1 – “Open and dynamic character” and Chapter 5 “Overcoming national borders”). More recently, in the same line, a residency programme coordinator describes what this aspiration is leading to:

Nowadays many young artists have the curiosity and the will to meet the other. Many are firstly drawn by a territorial or social context and once integrated, they meet the local community and the other artists. When artists meet and create together, something new takes place. In the beginning of our programme we used to call this process: “Eurocreation”.

(arts residence programme coordinator, French)

Mobility experiences tend to favour sociability and exchanges: whether by meeting up to discuss common issues or to join temporary artistic teams; by touring and being received by local hosts; by remaining for a period on residency; or by taking up a job or following a workshop abroad. Mobility practices are developing side by side with transdisciplinarity, hybridism, and site specific, among other tendencies. The outcome of the collaboration of artists with different backgrounds goes beyond geographical, linguistic, disciplinary and cultural roots. This is what the interviewee quoted above meant by the idea of “*Eurocreation*”.

These joint and interacted processes deepen the need for communication as well as social and civic competences. Group reasoning and acting requires coordination, organisation and communication abilities. These latter include personal, interpersonal and intercultural competence and cover all forms of behaviour that equip individuals to participate in an effective and constructive way in social, working and public life and to resolve conflict when necessary (EC, 2007a). It spans attitudes of collaboration, assertiveness and respect to both overcome prejudices and to compromise, notably by expressing and understanding different viewpoints, negotiating, creating confidence and empathy. Civic abilities involve critical and creative reflection, solidarity and constructive participation in local or wider community activities and decision-making at all levels.

When different cultural backgrounds are at stake we may talk specifically about intercultural competences even when working at the national or local level. Basically, intercultural competence is the ability to interact in heterogeneous groups (Fisher and Karpodini-Dimitriadi, 2007). Categories¹¹⁰ such as gender, age, race, religion, geographical origin, nationality, mother tongue, family, education and professional background, among others, are constitutive layers of one's cultural identity and together build up representations of ourselves, our work, life and the world in general. Actually cultural identity is a dynamic process and beyond our original upbringing throughout life many other features are added interfering and transforming the whole of our identity. The greater the cultural and/or geographical distance or the greater difference in between these categories, the more complex communication and interaction are likely to be.

Thus, even when working in our national territory, hometown and mother tongue, differences among individuals exist and get to be manifested. Yet when one "looses" the solid ground of a common culture plus plunges into a myriad of foreign languages and even professional profiles and disciplines, many other identity layers are added. The international domain, where professionals are constantly exposed to different cultures, intensifies the already complicated negotiation and interaction of identities within

¹¹⁰ Geertz, C. (1977) *The Interpretation of Cultures*, London: Basic Books; Glaser; Guilherme; Garcia; Mughan (2007).

working processes and takes social and civic competences into an intercultural perspective.

Living and working abroad or interacting with people from other cultural backgrounds can be demanding requiring flexibility to: face prejudices and discriminations; be able to conciliate different belongings; be ready to change daily and ordinary habits; and adapt to a different weather or food. When performing artists meet up in temporary project teams across borders, but also on the intersection of disciplines, languages and professional profiles, complexity increases as many cultural and identity layers are added.

The working sphere is a venue for communication where diversity coexists at different levels (as in social life in general). The workplace “*simply changes the location of interaction, not the predispositions and stereotypes that human beings bring to the situation*” (Glaser et al., 2007: 29). Though while working individuals focus on specific tasks and are framed by the common organisational and/or professional culture, still, various behaviours, habits, attitudes, methods, approaches, opinions translating former experiences, backgrounds, values, beliefs and representations get to meet. Differences, often unexpected, can be noticed, may raise eyebrows and sometimes even clash, especially when teams are temporary and intimacy and trust between members is minute. Relational competences within an intercultural perspective are therefore needed in order to make the most out of working moments by overcoming differences in the most productive and creative way. However this development¹¹¹ is gradual and implies change. In fact, it entails the expansion, improvement and reformulation of competences previously acquired in formal and informal education and practical experience as well as gaining a whole set of new competences: awareness of the self and the other; command of languages; cultural knowledge; sense-making; perspective taking; relationship building; community sense; and social responsibility.

When considering the mobility of performing artists across Europe, communication and relational competences have become crucial not only to build up an individual career, but also to develop a community as the only way to overcome mobility challenges. In

¹¹¹ Glaser; Guilherme; Garcia; Mughan (2007).

addition, ICT and social networks are providing an alternative space for group forming and action (Shirky, 2008). Beyond the rigid rules of formal organisations, networks enable the creation of collaborative groups that are larger and more distributed. Yet group undertaking is not a given but highly reliant on social competences.

The first challenge one faces in an intercultural encounter is the consciousness that one's perspective is rooted and therefore limited. It implies gaining awareness of ourselves and of the other and is linked to being able to recognise similarities and differences, distinguishing what is common and what are the aspects that make us different, whether as members of a particular culture or individuals. For fruitful interactions, consciously or instinctively, one needs to recognise the other and its difference in relation to us. Thus, in parallel, this process requires the development of our own self-consciousness. This step is not evident as one gets "blinded" by our own ethnocentric perspectives and visions of the world.

A small team of choreographers and dancers from three different countries across Europe got together to create a piece and were caught by surprise by the fact that their cultural differences hindered their communication and working process. This case is paradigmatic when acknowledging that the participants were from the beginning aware of bearing different cultural backgrounds intending to explore and question their own boundaries within the artistic work itself. Yet nevertheless their differences became barriers affecting the group dynamics.

In fact the roles and attitudes they expected from each other interfered in the way they interpreted and reacted to their actual behaviours. Different expectations towards working objectives and methods, as well as distinct attitudes reflecting gender and power relations condition and outlined processes and results. One of these choreographers appointed how simple differences in the way they approached each other resulted in misunderstandings:

The tone of voice, the rhythm, and the way phrases are constructed and put forward affected our response and consequently our movements in the rehearsal room. In some moments, I was actually offending my colleagues without

intention or realization.

(choreographer and manager, Romanian)

According to participants, their different cultural expectations gave place to mutual resistances, resentments and tensions and only then became visible and acknowledged by participants themselves. Yet afterwards they all realised the implications as some artistic options were neglected or not explored due to lack of understanding. Another creator part of this team, confessed that it was easier to express and question their differences within the creative work and onto the stage than verbally among them, as not everyone was at ease to reflect on this:

It was part of our artistic plan to find about our borders, so our conflicts were not necessarily negative, if we would have been able to deal with them better.

(choreographer, Italian)

The fact that they knew about their differences yet still reacted as it was unpredicted showed how difficult is to recognise differences in real practice and explore them positively instead of falling into communication traps. In this respect, participants admitted this experience was an important learning process about each other and their own selves as they were confronted with situations and questions whose meaning and consequences they did not perceive before.

The process of acknowledging our borders, as the creator above clarified, it is valuable but a complex one as it deals with exploration of identities. Reflecting upon one's culture-bound upbringing and standpoint and analysing in depth one's norms, values, beliefs and behaviours is the starting point towards accepting, understanding and respecting otherness. Yet in practice a great deal of performing artists are not used or adequately skilled to effectively identify differences in the first place and then transform them together into innovative artistic outputs. Moving on from recognising one's cultural ethnocentrism to cultural relativism is a long process comprising some initial confusion and even denial as we tend to dislike getting away from our comfort zone. At start we are likely to emphasise what is common and ignore differences.

A dance producer illustrates with another situation how the lack of awareness of the other and of difference, may delay or even put into cause artistic projects that are developed in between cultures. This project involved bringing a French choreographer to work in a Finnish environment and team:

Most of the team was home, feeling in solid ground and in line with the idea that “when in Rome do as the Romans do”. They were expecting the choreographer to work in their way and when it did not happen they were annoyed. I received complaints like: “we need a certain amount of warm up before we start in the morning”; and: “we do not want to work for 6 hours in a row a day, we prefer to have 3 hours and then a break”. It was strange because I was expecting dancers to simply adapt and absorb the new input.

(dance producer, Finish)

The producer discussed with the team and together they tried to find out how to deal with this lack of understanding. She perceived that most of the dancers were not used to work with different creators so they were not open and immediately ready to accept other ways. The guest, on his turn, felt frustrated to see its methods put into cause. Yet he also lacked the ability to understand and accept the difference and discuss it – *“he was expecting the dancers to have warmed up before the beginning of the session, for instance, while they were waiting for him to start up”-*, especially within a perspective of a participated co-creation process that the producers aimed at. At the end, a kind of a consensus was reached, by mixing the different requests and needs, yet nobody was satisfied with the process neither the final results.

These conflicts resulted from the different perceptions, working methods and habits at stake and led to disappointments of all those involved, choreographer, dancers and producer and possibly the audiences. Cultural ethnocentrism prevented participants from recognising difference itself. In this environment, confidence and trust did not develop which was damaging for the group cohesion and the creation process.

The initial encounter with difference demands abilities of conflict management, self-criticism and self-awareness and ability to understand and look at reality from different viewpoints. In some cases, we may already admit differences but unconsciously try to

trim them down: as the dancers trying to convince the visitor to adopt their own habits; or the choreographer insisting on imposing its own. Only after continuing interaction, may come a later phase of acceptance and levelling of difference and finally it might lead to integration. Yet in the case of this production there was no time to evolve in this way as the working schedule was tight and a result – even though named a work in progress – had to be shown to an audience. Much before participants could mature their relationship, they had to move on to something else.

Paradoxically, learning about the others and ourselves, reflecting on what is different and common are among the main core aspirations for mobility, as many artists express nowadays. This will to explore and learn from and with the others is present in the statement of a performance artist working with live and digital performance alongside partners and audiences worldwide:

The essence of going abroad is the desire to renew oneself and the arts. This is our common factor: to create something new, to explore, to see what is common and what is different, to combine, to join things, then “destroy” and re-construct them.

(performer, Brazilian)

Yet in practice many unconsciously fear and sometimes reject difference as it does not fit into their assumptions or pre-structures and they do not know how to deal with it. This exploration and renewal construction comes at a price, as it demands social and civic competences that many do not master.

The next theatre pedagogue argument might help us to clarify this difficult process when she talks about confrontation:

Cultural exchange is about provocation of our inner systems. If I am working in Italy, the USA or Germany, I am different. It changes me. It helps to question but also to reinforce my own identity, because this provocation means I get a distance to my home culture.

(theatre pedagogue, German)

The confrontation with other ways of looking and acting allows getting to know the difference, but also ourselves in a new perspective. When interactions are successful, aspects of both cultures are articulated and to some extent a new identity is constructed. Again we refer back to the idea of “*Eurocreation*” (quoted above) that is meant to name the common outcome of cross-border artistic processes (in this case taking place in Europe). This is the provocation that this theatre director talks about, which is intensified within artistic processes. The sense of exploration, mutual discovery, innovation and change are supposed to lie at the heart of joint creations. These leaning enterprises enclose many potentialities of development, professional and personal, thus the growing interest for this type of processes yet artists need to progress in terms of associated competences so to make the best out of it. In this respect, developing awareness of the self and the other is crucial. When deficient on this competence, the possession of digital and information management abilities to develop contacts and find information about partners, colleagues and places as well as planning skills to prepare carefully and adequately each moment might be of great help (in this chapter “Networking through the information maze”).

Working together across borders in temporary teams would require that participants try to get as much acquainted with each other as possible within the limited time they spend together so to make their communication the most effective. The attainment of the so called “cultural knowledge” allows increasing familiarity among participants, enriching the contents of communication itself and consequently facilitating adoption of more appropriate strategies.

One way is by means of accessing and absorbing information that allows making some sense out of practices and relationships with others even though not sharing the same cultural background. Some interviewees, like this dancer, creator and her own producer, highlighted the need to invest on obtaining information about the project, the event and the participants or organisations involved before engaging in mobility experiences:

The relationships between artists are always so intimate that they are impossible to predict, but the more informed and aware one is about the ones and the place we are working, the more likely we may react properly to all sorts of questions,

requests and conflicts that might arise.

(dancer, creator and producer, Finish)

In this respect, finding targeted information on the host countries and partners is a strategic and associated competence that artists need to make use of in order to feed their communication and social needs during their working processes. As a matter of fact, strategic and relational competences are intrinsically linked and nurture each other. Another approach is to plan and invest on spending longer time in places and with colleagues. This artistic director argues:

I feel the need for longer stays in the cities I visit with our shows, get to know better each venue and team. This might be more fruitful in a longer-term than accumulating visiting cards and stamps in our passport.

(artistic director, British)

This choreographer with many residencies abroad in its *curriculum* also agrees:

If timing would not be a constraint I would interact more with colleagues. It helps getting to know them better and being more precise in our working discussions.

(choreographer and dancer, Slovak)

Yet time is limited and the possession of the necessary resources “to stay longer” or “to interact more”, notably financial, might make a difference between an artist working within an institution and a self-employed working on a project basis with a higher pressure to move on to the next project.

This process of cultural acknowledgement or contextualisation presupposes other personal complementary skills such as openness and curiosity. A Portuguese choreographer that developed a longer-term creation and touring relationship with a counterpart from Spain refers to the permanent need:

To be very receptive and interested, otherwise the connection is not established

and nothing develops deeply.

(choreographer, Portuguese)

One needs to dedicate extra time and attention to communication and relationships in mobile contexts. Even if what brings people together are work related matters, their joint processes frequently demand a wider interest that goes beyond the purely professional sphere and mixes with social and personal sides. As if every detail would help to make the full picture clearer. The same choreographer insists it is crucial to:

Give many details and examples, to contextualise always, so others grasp you better.

(choreographer, Portuguese)

This is a way to try to make sense out of what they hear, see and feel so they can deal, interpret and process the new input coherently, even when uncertain and ambiguous and without mastering or even sharing the linguistic or cultural codes. Additionally, another dance creator insists on the importance of attention given not only to what is expressed but also to the way it is done (in this chapter “Lost in translation at the backstage”):

It is important to notice how people express things too, the way of speaking, not only the content.

(choreographer, Spanish)

In fact the capacity to see things from somebody else’s position and a multitude of angles, named perspective taking, rests on abilities such as empathy, flexibility, decentring, open-mindedness and again coping with ambiguity. Sidi Labi Cherkaoui, a Belgian choreographer of Moroccan origin, has articulated this need in a speech he gave at a round table held in Avignon in 2008 when discussing if art would be a laboratory for the intercultural:

Everybody has to be like a chameleon and has to put himself in the others’ shoes¹¹².

¹¹² *FestFlash 2 on Intercultural Dialogue*, Gent: European Festival Association, 2008.

This chameleon competence, the capacity of being open and changing views and behaviours, is in fact directly linked to a learning attitude (EC, 2007a). “*Collaborating is a learning experience on how different people work in diverse manners*”, argued a performer, reporting to international collaborations. This creator stresses how maintaining learning and reflective attitude is useful to keep up open and aware of differences:

I try positioning myself as a learner so it is easier to interact.

(performer, Brazilian)

As a matter of fact, relationship building that requires availability and mutual knowledge among partners, becomes essential in shared artistic processes whether lasting or ephemeral and when costs are high and time minute. Otherwise all these mobility flows are senseless and the diversity and richness of cultural differences are ignored instead of feeding into artistic processes and outcomes.

Even when performing artists work the most part of the way individually, assuming the majority of the tasks, they have to relate to others at an earlier or later stage of their work. Within mobility and cross-border collaborations social competence increases importance as more and more people are involved and needed in order to perform a project. A coordinator of a worldwide residency programme gives account of the affiliation inabilities of their different grantees:

Some artists adapt very well. Others give up. Some manage to interact quite easily. Others only find conflicts. Some engage and fit in the host groups. Others just feel like running away.

(arts residencies programme coordinator, Spanish)

Yet instead of being taken as a personality feature or a fatality, communication and social competences need to be pursued and trained. In the last decade, the boom of residencies associated to meeting and exchange, community living and discovery of other territories and cultures reflects the fact that relationship building and community sense are gaining importance in artistic processes. In these cases, residencies are mostly

a temporary working space in many cases open to the exterior and to dialogue with the territory and the local community.

However, when residencies first started, the situation was quite different. Residencies were firstly associated with the visual arts field or literature allowing its practitioners isolated environments to develop their individual ideas. Yet, nowadays also visual artists are engaging in more collaborative projects as well as residencies pop up in busy city centres too this curator tells:

Now many are working interdisciplinary so they create more collectively. Visual artists want to work with actors. On the other way round, performers have more individual projects and then accordingly join other professionals. The difference is that you often find group mobility in the performing arts while you don't see many visual artists moving in groups, I hardly imagine it.

(curator, Slovak)

Consequently residencies have been opening up also to performing artists, in groups but also individually, as nowadays they tend to pursue their careers in a more individual perspective, and allowing artists from all disciplines advantaged meeting spaces.

Nevertheless, there are other models and reasons for engaging in a residency besides interaction, from a purely material need of finding a working and production space to escape to a remote location, in line with the original motive, avoiding sociability and focusing exclusively on a project. Isolation needs have been less common in the performing arts but they also show up. Within the sample of interviewees, several artists have expressed their concerns with the fast pace that mobility introduces into their working life (in this chapter "Taking managerial risks"): "*I need time to experiment*"; "*I just want to research and not to be pressured*"; were quite frequent claims often associated to moving into a residency somewhere where they can "in peace" concentrate away from their daily life and their networks. Yet again, as this residencies expert describes, still common scenery nowadays is:

To be a place where participants live together as a group. Sometimes the programme is based on an artistic view; others it is based on the idea of

exchange. In this format residencies generate often to joint projects and further contacts.

(arts residencies network coordinator, Dutch)

By remaining on the same place during a certain period of time, informality and availability allow residents to intensify their concentration, mutual knowledge, and exchange of experiences and know-how that can feed artist processes. However this intimate environment requires increased capacity of understanding, interaction, and openness as each member portrays different expectations, perspectives, interests and visions.

While one can share ideas or information by accretion, simply joining others and engaging in a conversation, cooperation implies changing behaviours to synchronise with others. It requires negotiation and collective decisions to be taken creating a tension between individual and group goals (Schirky, 2008: 50).

A major requirement of relationship building is the development of trust that is of utmost importance in teamwork. Trust is one of the main elements that pull individual commitment to share and join efforts in view of a common goal. While in an established group working together since some time already, mutual knowledge and trust might be acquired conquests. In temporary teams, aggregated around a specific common project to which very few are exclusively committed, as many may follow in parallel other projects, everything happens faster thus the accent on communication and relationship building is higher and differentiated.

The following two testimonies express the hurdles but also benefits from working in temporary teams where people barely know each other and where languages and cultures are diversified. A choreographer that is gradually developing work along with partners in other countries tells:

We have to talk about our own work in a clearer way because we are in a strange environment. So we have to observe and realise how to collaborate with those strangers, being all so different, to make compromises without

disappearing, to have a say and put forward our intentions and still accept other versions and be able to negotiate.

(choreographer, Italian)

In these situations, the lack of mutual trust and confidence needs to be compensated by other competences of social order such as leadership, negotiation; conflict management; tolerance and adaptability. On the other side, an actress that worked as a freelance abroad confesses:

It is wonderful to work with someone I do not know. You give so much from yourself and then there is an intimacy that develops faster that can even be higher if we are strangers. Being in a permanent group makes it easier for practical things, no need to explain everything, on the other hand, you tend to stop searching and become complacent.

(actress, Swedish)

The lack of mutual knowledge might also create an environment where members feel freer from the weight of social constraints and are able to recreate themselves in their interactions with others. This uncomplicated intimacy, referred by the actress above, is based not on a long-term trust but on this freedom. This potential might generate valuable inputs to the artistic process yet needs to be explored intensively – “*you cannot stop searching*” -, so to pool into a common goal.

Investing on interaction and on the process of collaboration operates some changes in the way creators conceive and perspective their own artistic objects, making a gradual turn from the individual towards the collective.

Beyond developing a reflection about my work, my mobility makes me think on how I can communicate this reflection with others.

(...)

It is hard to find similarities and engage in collectives. It is more obvious to do our own thing.

(choreographer, Italian)

This choreographer also quoted just before realises that her goal is not only her own artistic development; it concerns also making sense to others. This collective perspective and communication mission has always been present in the performing arts at least when considering audiences. Traditionally, an art piece aimed ultimately to communicate to a public. Yet, mobility sets communication as a key requirement from project conception to development and dissemination. Communication becomes an aim and an end of the process itself and in relation to all participants. Consequently community sense goes beyond audiences and the stage to include artists themselves as professionals but also citizens. This increased sense of the collective feeds into the idea of social and civic responsibility that is the last intercultural competence development stage.

As a matter of fact, the pulverisation brought by increasing individualisation engendered the need to share and encounter partners that in a certain moment pursue similar interests and with whom one can develop projects together. In this respect, in the above quote, this choreographer compares the easiness of a solo career to the complexity of joint collaborations. Yet she also realised the need of belonging to communities not permanently or exclusively but by collaborating with different groups of people “*sort of networks*”, as she calls them. These multiple belongings take place in informal network logics and though ephemeral and scattered, they are being connected and maximised by the use of digital tools:

My partners throughout Europe are easily reachable.

(theatre actor and director, British)

This was said carelessly by a comedian when thinking about the benefits of the internet, the mobile phone or low fare air companies. Indeed ICT and social networks have been facilitating group forming and development. Gradually these interconnected practices are contributing to create a myriad of informal international networks of artists that share aims and work identities. A theatre director used to work in different countries and languages confirms this need for sharing common interests (Bauman, 2004):

The more we are mobile the more we have to create identity situations within

groups or places, to share our interests and find soul mates.

(theatre director, Swiss)

The following creator talks about a “*potential European ensemble*” when she refers to what is going on in Europe in terms of mobility and artistic collaboration across borders:

We come together with our peers, people we have met in different occasions and with whom we can talk our own “language” very immediate and seriously to the point and develop common projects. It is like an incredible network of people.

(theatre director, French)

This “*meeting place*” allowing a diversity of interactions favours exchanges and consequently puts into cause established borders. In fact when artists from different countries create and display the results of their work together in community, they’re blurring and re-defining several established concepts. For the responsible for an international residency programme:

They are overcoming the issue of whether it is a domestic or international production. We do not know anymore exactly where it comes from. It is just an artistic production coming out of an interaction.

(arts residency programme coordinator, Spanish)

A theatre pedagogue expresses the same type of feelings:

It becomes a non-issue if I am working in Germany or Italy, it does not matter.

(theatre pedagogue, German)

Indeed artists seem not to be interested in finding out the provenience of their joint works but to explore instead its advantages. A dance creator clarifies her concern:

I am not interested in the political process or to create a political piece, what inspires me is the human dimension of this political transformation in Europe, because I was, myself and my work, transformed by this process.

(choreographer, Italian)

Another artist, this time an actor, talks enthusiastically about the idea of Europe based on his experience abroad:

When working with others on a common project, we are discovering ourselves. Beyond language differences and our own artistic projects; I feel we have common values too, a kind of European belonging somehow.

(actor, Belgian)

Artist's joint experiences in Europe may be contributing to develop a common belonging yet this feeling seems to be directly connected with professional interests and practices more than political aspirations or vision. Moreover it is not automatically coincident with the political idea of a EU identity or citizenship as affirmed from the notice of the following network coordinator:

Artists are not thinking in terms of EU when they plan their projects; it is not predominant in their minds.

(performing arts network coordinator, German)

A great deal of the performing artists interviewed showed no deep conviction on the EU political project and its challenges. However many insist on a vague but steady idea of Europe as shared stage for the performing arts with multiple but also common identities and belongings that cross the EU borders, spread throughout the whole continent and connect worldwide. A theatre director defends:

The theatre community should work on the issues concerning the sector together not in competition. It would be interesting to come back to this "common" knowledge of theatre as a European language. Our education and training systems have to open up for changes and we have to discuss them jointly. Language and communication are changing completely and the actor cannot remain in the XIX century.

(theatre director, Swiss)

This statement refers to the historical difficulty of the sector to get together in a common voice yet networks are gradually assuming the role of political mediators, in

what comes to collective reflection and contribution to decision making at EU level (Chapter 1 “Open and diverse character”; “Fragile social condition at home and abroad” and “Intricate barriers and increasing circulation control”). A EU administrator in the culture and education domain has prompted:

The possibility to access resources depends very much on the political organisation and consequent capacity to express what is actually its potential to the society.

(EC administrator, French)

In fact this idea of a European community of interests and practices that might get translated into a stronger political role is closely related to the development of the sector internal organisation and action. Mobility is reinforcing this need however this development is reliant in the active contribution of members in order not only to benefit but also to make it stimulating. Collective action requires commitment and responsibility. Even virtual networks and platforms require users to stay connected otherwise they loose track of opportunities and developments. The next network manager talks precisely of their difficulty in getting feedback and input from professionals into their discussion forums and initiatives:

People connect but they are mostly concerned to grasp information or to see their own contents disseminated not to give back. So there is not necessarily real interaction.

(network manager, Belgian)

Even beyond the arts field, when looking at how social networks are evolving, Schirky (2008) confirms the above statement by affirming that:

In the current spread of social tools, real examples of collective action – where a group acts on behalf of, and with shared consequences for all of its members – are still relatively rare.

The result of these multiple collaborations and communities might be “*greater than the sum of its parts*” (Maitland and Roberts, 2006), yet, members have to attain their

individual will to the common goal and in the best of cases, make it their own. In other words, be able to recognise themselves in the group, have a community sense and shared vision. In fact, a clear definition of objectives, roles and positioning of each intervenient is required as the development of interaction is nurtured on the maturity and affirmation of each individual artistic project. The next theatre director and pedagogue (German) highlights the need for “*each participant to know its role and message within the group and the piece*” so that communication takes place.

The challenge of being socially responsible or acquiring civic competence presupposes that each member is committed and able to balance in an enriching manner, similarity and difference so to enable groups to generate more interesting achievements.

Artists need to reason strategically in order to consider their present and future artists projects and aims and position themselves in terms of places to be, pieces to attend or people to contact and network with. The more an artist is able to liaise an entrepreneurial attitude (or have managers working side by side) along with a mature artistic project the more it will take benefit out of international encounters and collaborations. There are numerous people involved, different interests at stake thus individual will and rhythms need to be negotiated and submitted to the common good. Many artists or groups are not prepared to stand the pressures of this demanding environment as they cannot cope nor adapt to its requisites and profusion of opportunities. The ability to make decisions is also crucial and depending on the information one can access but as well as the solidity and confidence in its own project and vision. Additionally the financial costs and timings of administrative, managerial and production tasks attached to international co-productions and touring and participation in networks come out as burdens that only those professionalized and resourceful enough are able to face.

The following choreographer gives account of how benefiting from these organisations requires constant participation and payment of a membership which not always is compatible with its agendas and budgets:

I found very difficult to follow, because meetings were exactly in periods when I was working and I could not frequently be present. I was not attending and paying a membership and not being able to go for a long period of time... I would lose connection. If you are not then the rest does not function. I could not afford it.

(choreographer and dance centre director, Romanian)

The access and participation in networks are dependent on the accumulation of social and economic capitals. These are determinant as they condition access to organisations and their memberships, events participation, and long-term maintenance of a net of contacts.

Despite resources and investment required, the fact is that many artists believe in the potential effects of their actual meetings and joint experiences across Europe towards mutual understanding and dialogue. These are the arguments used by the sector to defend and promote the value of their mobility. An orchestra player and conductor states:

Art is not a mean - art is a space in which everything is possible, in which different times, subjects and objects, sometimes divergent, coexist, communicate and create values. Art might initiate a dialogue among various expressions and people. For artists, communication is essential, both with the audience and among professionals.

(orchestra director, Belgian)

There are many artists working assumingly for a political and social cause, trying precisely to open up horizons, ways for dialogue and develop awareness and self-confidence in different target groups. An actress tells us about her experience in a foreign country:

I did some work about opening the stage to people of different colour and accents, emigrants, which is something I feel close to having been an emigrant myself. One of our works was based not on our differences, that were more or

less obvious, but finding what was common and made us similar.

(actress, Finish)

This interest for taking up a more direct social role by using of artistic processes to facilitate development and education is also a current tendency within artistic mobile practices (Chapter 5 “Questing new inputs and interactions”). Artists are gradually being interested and also called upon to explore the potential of arts processes and many residency and mobility schemes have a social or even political role associated.

Yet the search for developing mutual understanding and dialogue among different cultures and backgrounds might be a valuable perspective for participating in this shared artistic space, though it is not necessarily a given. As discussed here, intercultural work is highly demanding in terms of competences and resources and only those in possession of certain capitals may reach or contribute to an effective dialogue. Otherwise these European encounters may result also in conflicts and misunderstandings. The building up of relationships and a community at a distance even with the precious help of ICT that makes group forming much easier, still requires a lot of investment and expertise and calls for new experimentations.

Actually in the performing arts world communication and social interaction should happen within the artistic team but also towards a final public. An international programmer claims that mobility and shared creation shall target:

What is important is to create a communication that makes sense.

(performing arts programmer, Belgian)

The so-called universality of the performing arts relies more on communication and social competences of the artists as well as the audiences, rather than in the music instruments or the body. On the other side, this European common artistic space to develop fully needs to motivate and associate audiences to this sense of community and belonging. These artistic practices involving other communities just mentioned above are precisely a way to interact and integrate audiences at an earlier stage of the artistic process. As a result, art is not a final product delivered to a static audience, but a process that already involves the public.

From the perspective of the performing artist, stimulating these fruitful interactions requires the articulation of a set of artistic, strategic, communicational and social competences as well as a fine-tuning between individual and social interests. These abilities are fundamental to make the most out of shared processes in search of a common expression and vision that can make sense in the communication with audiences.



PART III

CHALLENGING ARTISTS' PRACTICES AND PROFILES

7. CONFINED ASPIRATIONS

Setting the market for the performing arts

Throughout this research mobility has been often referred as a mean and not an end. Performing artists, arts managers, cultural and labour market experts and EU officers, independently from their different perspectives and intentions, express a common belief that mobility is a tool to reach certain goals not a final target. Yet the analysis of artistic, professional, economical and political aspirations reveals mobility as a desired potential that is simultaneously a mean and an end in itself. The argument is that mobility aspirations of different sorts act as constraints, drawing career paths that hardly find a way out of the mobility spiral.

Many factors come together to feed ambitions and plans but also needs for the European market. The aggregation of all voices and experiences analysed depict four main interdependent clusters of aspirations for mobility: geographical, economical, political and artistic. Aspirations for mobility in the performing arts are formed out of a mutual articulation between institutional and individual drivers: some relate to institutional frameworks and conditions while others are inherent to individual horizons and projects.

Starting up from the perspective of institutions, mobility aspirations are nurtured as a feature of global labour markets, the EU political process as well as the performing arts professional field itself. Globally as well as across the EU the employment landscape has shifted significantly in recent years towards flexibilisation resulting in an increasing emphasis on mobility and intermittent, temporary, project-based ways of working across all sectors. There is a transition from the paradigm of job security to that of career security instead. In this fast evolving market, labour mobility is said to improve individual job prospects by enriching career paths with new skills and experiences.

Alongside, the free movement of persons is also a main political target of the EU project. In the last decade, the need to invest on competitiveness as well as citizenship, is gradually transforming mobility into a key political instrument that ought to be mainstreamed at different policy levels. The development of the single market needs

workers that are skilled, available and willing to move. The strengthening of the EU as a political union needs citizens that identify with and are engaged in the process of European construction. Promoting and facilitating mobility seems to be the way forward for the EU to achieve the internal market and to come closer to its citizens.

However, in this process, mobility turns onto being more than a mere instrument to develop and reach an optimal professional status, a more flexible internal market or the enforcement of EU citizenship. It becomes gradually the very essence and fabric of this market, as professionals and citizens are supposed to permanently be able to rebound from one project or country to the next and to surf between desirable positions in an ever-changing environment.

In what comes to the performing arts, the above referred economical, political and artistic targets to promote and facilitate mobility have also been reflected within policies, funding programmes and professional expectations. The EU as well as European networks and professional organisations have been defending and encouraging the right of artists to cross borders in the context of their work. In the last decade there has been a channelling of funds and grants to cross-border projects and mobility from public to private sources, including governments, foundations, networks and arts centres. As a two-way road the emergence of funds and schemes to support transnational mobility and cooperation has also been contributing to nurture artistic aspirations for cross border collaboration and interaction.

In parallel nowadays performing artists' mobility prospects are moving further and being incorporated at the very heart of artistic practices and processes. Artists are not only presenting their works abroad but in addition they are also conceiving, creating and producing them cross-borders. This trend is comparatively more recent as it requires freedom to move and easy access to transports and communication means that simply would not be possible in the past. Beyond traditional travel to tour finished artworks, currently performing artists are also coming together in different places to do it all jointly from scratch. In this turn, theatre professionals, for instance, are also questioning their language dogmas and trying out new ways of expressing and constructing their art through their mobility experiences. These practices are changing the very essence of artistic processes and outcomes. In this setting mobility is more than a meagre mean,

but the cement where everything is built upon. Mobility as a concept takes place not only at geographical level but also virtual and in between disciplines and sectors.

As a consequence, the nurturing of mobility expectations is re-defining the market for arts. This special market, not looking for profit and therefore freer from audiences and consumers constraints, is in fact influenced at the very source of the production line by founders' goals and policies. Then again, mobility constitutes a whole framework for the performing arts that beyond being a political instrument is also a professional *modus operandi*. As mobility serves as a mean for the EU project and the fostering of international cooperation but also as a funding source for artists to make their living across borders. In this process, mobility turns also into a purpose of the market.

However the current pro-mobility environment seems to be convincing artists to dive into a European scene without any safety net. In this shift, mobility comes out as an artistic option at the same time as the only way for these professionals to make their living. Even though the opportunity for mobility may seem to represent an upgrade for the sector, in practice it is not followed by any concrete improvement in terms of their working and social conditions. In fact, artists would need to see advancements in their professional status so to safely take this European step.

As demonstrated in existing literature and confirmed by this research, the sector vulnerable social condition is intensified by the wider European market. Being mobile is highly demanding in competences and resources. In addition, Europe is an unbalanced territory in what comes to working means, policies and consequent artistic dynamics and opportunities. This uneven scenario draws up divergent aspirations for mobility, putting a higher pressure on those who do not find the appropriate resources home.

Yet at the moment the market presupposes their mobility to feed the desired creativity, the welfare state is withdrawing and not willing to provide them with adequate means and protection net in return. The promises of flexicurity remain an intention not yet translated into concrete actions for most European countries. Confined to an intensified fragility artists are left on their own without social back up to value and ensure their free expression and art.

Paradoxically, improving working conditions and social statuses have been the main causes for mobility in the first place. Yet nowadays, beyond individual aspirations, mobility became a panacea and an economical, political and professional value. So artists are confronted with mobility expectations and constraints to which they have to tune their individual projects and strategies not always to their advantage even though on its behalf and under this illusion.

Unbalanced access

Mobility became an essential resource in contemporary societies: to access goods and services but also social relations, education and work opportunities. Yet actually mobility remains a right and a practice of only a few. As a source of wealth and distinction, mobility is being rephrased by social scientists in terms of social justice in view of the persistence of inequalities. Heirs of global cosmopolitanism are claiming now for universal citizenship and freedom of movement as human rights.

The EU project is pioneer in widening the scope of access to this right to a supra-national level. However beyond granting it as a legal right, societies and its political systems need to develop what this right to mobility actually entitles: effective means to access it democratically and fairly. Besides being recognised as a right-freedom, mobility needs also to be taken as a right-entitlement.

In this intricate scenario, upon the decision to engage in mobility, the borders dividing choice and need are fading. In between a thoughtful and strategic career project and a response to a state of destitution many different intricate aspirations and conditionings play in. Each individual path results then from a unique combination of personal and institutional factors.

Taking a look into aspirations from the perspective of individual artists, mobility constitutes a potential that many are eager to explore. The freedom of crossing borders is appealing and inspirational and artists are willing to tour, meet, share, interact, learn and create in different places and with different people.

However when facing deficient working conditions and even absence of freedom of expression home artists are more likely to aspire to take their chances abroad. For these, the opportunity to move and work in countries offering better working infrastructures, favourable policies and an adequate social status might be the obvious response to their needs. Additionally, geographical factors can also make professionals more susceptible to move. All those living and working in peripheral countries or rural areas in Europe are tempted to move to more central urban locations where the artistic scene is more dynamic, work opportunities are bigger and travelling is cheaper.

As a matter of fact, the different individual mobility aspirations and consequent paths taken are also evidence for the unbalanced working and living conditions in the different countries throughout Europe. Resources are not equally distributed and concentrate thanks to economies of scale in few central and cosmopolitan locations. Regardless of EU targets to build up an integrated Union and the help of ICT, territorial differences remain and configure varied drivers for mobility.

In fact, mobility turns into the best way out for those artists living in regions where economical, political and geographical conditions are not favourable to artistic creation. For professionals under these harsher circumstances, the distinction between being mobile as the result of a choice or in response to a need is rather tiny and worthless. The key factors that delineate the different individual decisions and paths will be of another sort, notably, age, gender, family status and conditions, financial and educational background, social contacts and networks.

Since mobility demands holding specific resources, many artists, even those facing less favourable scenarios for the pursuing of their art, cannot aspire to be mobile. Even to be able to dream and conceive projects at the European scale, one needs to have developed in parallel certain competences that allow these dreams to arise and take shape. Artists need to enlarge their horizons and experiences so to widen their aspirations. In this respect many have claimed: *“the more you are mobile the easiest to be mobile”* as mobility feeds mobility, in other words, aspirations are nurtured by competences.

As proposed by this research theoretical framework, both at individual and institutional level mobility demands holding certain specific resources of financial, political, social,

education and cultural order. Mobility is a potential that can be conceived in terms of aspiration and competences. In this line of arguments, these personal and institutional categories influence again both aspiration and ability. Even aspirations, supposing the territory of free flowing dreams, are moulded by individual and institutional backgrounds. Therefore obstacles to performing artists' mobility lie also within aspirations and competences, further then legal-administrative type of barriers.

Acting as filters to EU legal frameworks, these factors influence access to mobility in complex ways that end up reproducing previous structures and inequalities and trapping its emancipation promises. Paradoxically, in practice, those holding the right profile and resources are not always the ones prone or effectively engaging in mobility because they might not aspire or need it even though they have the choice and the competences. It is the case of a great part of EU citizens entitled to free movement that are not willing to take it up and keep intra-EU mobility figures quite low. On the other side of the fence, those not holding the right to move freely seem to be more willing to take their chances as their aspirations and needs might be more intense, yet legal obstacles make their mobility burdensome.

Moreover for all those less resourceful thus willing to try their luck, mobility may even increase their fragility as they do not have family, organisational, social security or national structures behind as safety nets. Thus being mobile and flexible despite quite valued in the market might well increase the precariousness of those already less qualified at the national level whether geographical, political, economical, educational or even artistically. Mobility is thus a risk as high as its potential rewards for all those not privileged enough to hold the right resources.

Mobility as a background scenario has always been quite familiar to performing artists. However, also in this field, engaging in mobility is turning out to be an increasingly common aspiration and feature of careers. Performing artists, free from national and organisational constraints, but also therefore less socially protected, have been able to develop mobility aspirations and practices throughout times. Artists have been getting away from their national markets limitations regarding infrastructures, social status, audiences, and policies to benefit in terms of inspiration, income, skills and exchange of ideas. However, in the performing arts too, this mobility has been a prerogative of only

a few: those successful enough inside borders to engage in an international career; and the only survival path for those incapable to make it home. In addition, the social vulnerability of these professionals, resulting of the lack of professional regulation and atomised condition gets amplified in the wide European scene so they remain highly at risk.

8. COMPETENCES TO LIVE UP TO THE EUROPEAN STAGE

Competitive career engagement

Engaging in mobility within one's work is said to constitute a formal and informal learning occasion at both professional and personal level. However this process is not a given and professionals need to hold adequate frameworks and resources to be able to integrate and handle these learning to their benefit.

The European space, often added up and articulated with local and national scales, widens the dimension and diversity of one's field of action and belonging, amplifying chances but also pitfalls. In order to successfully face these challenges, professionals have to adopt a dynamic and entrepreneurial attitude towards their career development and position in this market. Therefore the greater need for managerial and strategic type of competences that rationalise the ways artistic projects and careers are conceived and pursued. A specific competence set ranging from basic business planning to presentation (e.g. pitching an idea) and management become essential for artists to produce and promote their work. Market entry is directly inhibited by knowledge-obstructing factors such as the lack of business competences and of knowledge of market opportunities.

In this larger scenario it is not enough to be a creator or interpreter; artists need also to adopt a multitude of other roles and act like managers, public relations and even become polyglots. The conduction of an artistic process across-borders demands the combination and interaction of these different competences besides purely technical-artistic. Even if specialists might assume managerial functions within an artistic project, still there is a need for artists to lead, negotiate, discuss ideas, aims and plans with all partners and experts involved. Therefore articulation of artistic, strategic and relational competences reveals crucial. The possession or absence of these abilities conditions and moulds working processes and at later stages influences as well the results, the works of art.

So, mobility accentuates the need to assemble diverse competences around an artistic project, shaping profiles in new ways that question discipline borders and consequently formal educational curricula. Beyond a fixed set of knowledge and techniques, the capacity to coordinate and act within different competences and scales, from local to European level, translated into the idea of entrepreneurship, makes a difference between projects and professionals, as competition for resources is high. Yet these competences are not specifically taught within arts education and training. Often they are learnt through general education and within socialisation inside the family and then from work experience. Nevertheless, in many cases, once the decision to follow a career in the arts is taken, especially if in earlier ages, this kind of competences tends not to be much valued comparing to aesthetic, dramatic or bodily forms of expression. Consequently, while for some professionals these competences may represent a considerable obstacle, for others, in possession of this cultural capital, it is an added value in their artistic paths.

Education and training systems react slowly to the new challenges of the performing arts sector and of European labour markets. Nevertheless, academic curricula and training offers are gradually acquiring an international perspective on issues such as management, communication, marketing and funding. The Bologna Process is also contributing to re-structuring the education system, by including mobility into educational paths as well as considering and valuing informal learning. However, in most of the cases, it is in their daily practice that professionals face the extra competence demands of mobility and end up learning by doing.

In this more demanding and competitive market, needs for permanent training, update and participation double. There is an urge to be constantly on the move and staying connected to acknowledge and benefit from mobility opportunities. Otherwise one risks of loosing contacts, schedules, deadlines, contracts and/or partners. Time management as well as of pressure to produce (to remain on the scene) is fundamental, most especially in a moment when in reaction to this fast speed, joint reflection and research get more valued by artists.

Actually, being abroad, in constant travels or within temporary teams, requires extra energy and time than when working in familiar environments, where mutual acknowledgment and trust has been established. Being at “home” may allow more time

for creation and thought, thus nowadays several professionals are claiming back their need to feel and be settled in order to concentrate properly on their work.

Moreover the European market requires ability and capacity to risk and invest to stay on the scene before starting to be financially compensatory, therefore the need to constantly produce is higher. Consequences are diverse and introduce an overall boost in competitiveness in the sector and a redefinition of strategies, relationships, concepts and roles. Professionals have now to conceive and implement their projects in ways that require permanently adapting their targets, processes and their own profiles to this fast evolving and more complex market. So many artists are in permanence looking for funding, sending applications; conceiving different projects and connecting with different partners across Europe to ensure their “place”. Yet, they see often access to many funding opportunities closed, as many programmes are ill adapted to their unstable enterprises but designed for more stable organisational formats, which can be granted bank loans and assume co-funding shares.

Flexibility and mobility are crucial for performing artists yet imply many risks. Thus the mobility spiral might be a trap that does not necessarily lead to better working conditions and social status and most of all to quality of living and working. Ironically, one of the main aspirations for mobility is precisely the search for an enlarged and more beneficial market. Many professionals choosing to work across borders strive to see their working conditions improved, especially those coming from countries with deficient infrastructures or policies. Yet without a safety net, risk increases and capacity of manoeuvre and initiative may be potentially reduced.

As competition in the European arena is higher, in practice, the potential fragility of those less resourceful in terms of the set of competences analysed but also of other previous capitals namely economical, social and political increases. Departure conditions are not equal due to different personal and institutional features that determine these capitals and competences. Thus in spite of promises of increased opportunities and learning, the intensity of engagements and competence demands that mobility requires, may make domestic inequalities more visible in the common European stage.

Art practices as temporary collaborative hybrid projects

Interaction in the European space stimulates creators, traditionally more centred in their own individuality at the level of their artistic principles and methods, to associate and foster collaborations along with peers and beyond the arts community.

On one side, the wider scale of the European market pushes the need to join efforts to better benefit, face and respond to its overwhelming chances yet extra demands and complexity. Artists look for economies of scale via joint creations, co-productions and networking so that they can share and access means and working tools. By connecting artistic processes across-borders they are actually overcoming the atomisation of the sector in self-employed and micro small organisations.

In parallel, along the way, besides geographical borders, traditional frontiers between disciplines and its hierarchies get blurred raising interest in participative transdisciplinary work. Many performing artists and other art related professionals are getting together to meet, discuss, create and perform across cultures, languages, disciplines and professional profiles. While working side by side, room is created for hybridisation to flourish. Themes, methods, techniques, values and visions are exchanged and mutually nurtured and modified.

These temporary creative project teams are constituted and organised around common work identities and aims. Most of the members live and work in different places and just come together in specific moments while accumulating participations in several ongoing projects. Thus the work develops in different phases in time and space so that intervenients may join up live and link their individual contributions. These collaboration projects tend to happen in a more open and informal way, questioning formal hierarchies, roles and rigid leaderships within artistic process and disciplines. In many cases tasks are distributed flexibly according to schedules and circumstances.

In this process, digital tools are essential as powerful means of information and communication among displaced team members but also may constitute new exciting creation tools. This way, projects may advance and explore new forms, as virtual mobility can fill in the gap of the absence of physical co-presence. According to Shirky

(2008: 47) social networks tools provide a space for action by loosely structured groups, operating without managerial direction and outside the profit motive.

As a result of these collaborative developments, management, language and communication competences become determinant. The absence of these abilities paths the way to potential tensions only those more resourceful can cope with.

Firstly, strategic and managerial competences are needed in order to efficiently plan, implement and accomplish the myriad of schedules and responsibilities these processes across-borders bring along. So artists can assure in between quality time enough for concentrating on the creation and its research, reflection and interaction demands.

Then efficient communicational tools can diminish the lack of time, confidence and mutual acknowledgement usual of temporary teams, transdisciplinary, multilingual and without rigid hierarchies and/or a clear leadership. The descend of hierarchies as well as of clear frontiers and rules between disciplines and roles within the creation processes is a big challenge for professionals. On one side it offers a great territory for freedom and experimentation. However it is highly demanding in terms of competences notably communication wise, as misunderstandings may arise easily, might provoke tensions and even cause failure.

To start with, in most of these projects, partners are mutually dependent, especially because they tend to congregate funds, support and co-producers from different countries and sources. It is actually difficult for some partners to keep on without the support or will of the others in case of dispute. This flexible division of labour can also result in accumulation of roles and functions that may favour fragility as certain tasks are frequently executed without specific expertise. This is particularly the case for projects of a smaller dimension or less resourceful.

Additionally hierarchies tend to be loose without clear leadership. In view of the challenges some experts argue for reinforced leadership¹¹³ in order “*to take the boat into a safe haven*”. Project-based informal organisations unstable ever-changeable nature

¹¹³ Lars Gandsø background material to the workshop “Communication Skills” held at Copenhagen Keđja encounter, 5th September 2008: <http://kedja.net/UserFiles/File/Gands%20pp.ppt> (accessed April 2012).

would require clear values and goals at the backstage to nurture the necessary trust and commitment. This strong leadership is in many of these experimental teams absent leading to complex processes and difficult implementation of scheduled plans.

On top these teams also have to sort out divergences of aesthetical and other artistic and method related order. Especially as the reaction and communication with their audiences is not predictable. Since outcomes of these projects are often meant to tour, they cannot rely on a concrete discipline, culture or language framework to sustain their legibility upon. Thus the fear of not being able to establish a meaningful relationship with audiences is constant and increases the complexity of these enterprises.

Finally, these collaborative practices also put into question all those that take part at their very individual level. In fact, the intensification of exchanges and participatory methods requires also the affirmation and definition of each individual project. Professionals need to develop the ability to balance creative independence with the ability to work collaboratively.

To conclude, the passage from individual to collaborative artistic processes at the European level can only be a space of learning if participants gather the adequate competences and capitals. Managerial and relational abilities are crucial but also holding financial, cultural and social resources to back them up. Individuals and their temporary groups need to be available to invest in long standing personal contacts so they ensure access to meeting, reflection and research spaces. Beyond investment in the artistic project itself, it is necessary to plan and manage efficiently human resources and assure financial and material means that will make the difference when accessing adequate working conditions. Thus the stress on the development of communication competences to be able to effectively work and interact together in short-term periods substituting experience and trust common to permanent more homogenous groups.

In this shift, many artists start reacting as they feel their range of possibilities enlarged and restrained at the same time. They claim for longer-term strands for reflection and research so to improve and mature communication within artistic teams but also the relationship towards all partners involved and with the territory and the audience.

Otherwise mobility would just be ephemeral and would not leave any trace, as those involved remain as strangers.

Processes more important than final results

Mobility and cross-border collaborations are contributing to question the very nature of art works. Professionals, processes, venues and audiences are all on the move and/or constantly changing. This character brings challenges to the way art is conceived, realised and actually performed. As a matter of fact, the creator(s), within a collective artistic process or in face of a piece intended for touring, have to consider as well other participants' intentions and arguments, territories and communities in which they are working, transportation conditions, venues and locations for presentation as well as audiences' features.

Among the changes dragged by mobility, the most relevant is the fact that processes acquire relevance over final products. In many cases, processes become the aim or at least an important element of artistic projects, for the sake of discussion, creating, performing or playing together. The making of concentrates a great deal of the attention of professionals, content and managerial wise. As discussed before, this new stress in the collaboration itself is opening artistic processes up to the effective participation of different profiles and contributes.

Certainly, the simple fact that artists travel or stay abroad for a while might have an impact in the content and shape of their work. Territories and local communities, with whom in many projects artists are supposed to work with or for may serve as inspiration or constitutive elements for the artistic exploration. Nowadays, with virtual tools, artists may search for inspiration and partners literally everywhere in the world. There is no obligation for physical presence. Yet still territories and its communities influence artists and their works of art. Precisely one of the basic aspirations for mobility is the eagerness to get to know new geographies and cultures, sometimes associated to the wish to intervene and interact at the social and political level.

Yet, beyond influencing themes and problematic of artworks, mobility aspirations and competences might also lead to a need to reflect on the future direction and even shape of the content of this work. Some artistic teams, temporary or of a more permanent basis, and certain works are produced bearing in mind the specific rules and conditionings of the European market. Actually productions travel better when they are small and imply moving few resources whether human or material. “Heavy” shows are more expensive to transport. Oversized or very fragile settings are also a lot more complicated to move and pass through customs and likely to cost more.

There is also a higher risk implied in the programming of big productions. The point is not only the price, but also the risk associated to return of such high investment. On the other side, minimal productions are a lot cheaper, but as they are usually of a more experimental character, they represent an investment hardly recoverable as less public might be interested. Big productions are costly but tend to attract wider and more diversified audiences. On the other side, experimental essays are only meaningful for a smaller crowd. Thus programmers and producers are precautious when taking a show that is less movable and tend to prefer solos, monologues and one-man shows.

There are changes brought by mobility aspirations and processes to the way creators are thinking when conceiving their works. Artists have to be more reflexive and consider the potential consequences of their choices, as the wider market demands long-term planning right from conception. This step reveals how mobility is gradually making artists more aware of other participants needs in the artistic process besides their own. Yet, does this mean a compromise in their artistic aims and freedom? Creators may keep on having the choice and freedom to “do their own thing”, yet they have to face and assume the consequences, one of them being the difficulty in touring as their show might be too pricy or complex to transfer from place to place.

Creators, conscientious of the conditions imposed, seem to adapt, assume these influences on their work, and come up with their own proposals. Many invest on pieces that are transferable to a multitude of venues, including non-conventional and informal locations in order to increase presentation opportunities and reach diverse audiences. External conditionings of different sorts have always influenced artistic processes of all

times and the European market increases the dimension and spectrum of pressures, and artists should bear it in mind.

Programmers, producers and financial support systems all impose constraints to freedom of expression and creation and professionals have to consciously know how to position themselves. Yet artistic collaborations that give high importance to processes, group dynamics and experimentation, rather than the final result, may find also obstacles when facing an audience. In reality there are art works that are non-transferable, making sense only for a certain site specific or cultural context, thus not every art piece is able to tour. Regarding audiences, other professionals involved, such as programmers, might have a role to play in what investment in improving communication is concerned.

Still concerning the relation with audiences, another consequence of playing in the European arena relates to the lack of responsiveness and intimacy between artists and their work and the public, as most frequently they are unknown to each other (excepting for those with an acquired prestigious international career). In addition, it is harder for foreign artists that are not “world famous” to get national media coverage and raise interest in local audiences.

The increased dimension and multitude of intervenients of the European scene bring quite a lot of challenges to artistic processes and consequently influence art works. From logistic and material constraints to other partners and audiences demands, art processes and works have to be intensively negotiated. Artistic diversity and freedom needs to be ensured above material pressures to make art that travels and fits everywhere. Thus even stronger strategic and relational competences are required so art can travel as freer as possible and flexibility does not mean vulnerability.

Emergence of communities of interest and practices

Finally, interaction across borders is giving place to the emergence of communities of interests and practices that gradually are contributing to develop the sector’s collective organisation and action in the European space. This movement is in parallel, raising

political awareness and redefining the way artist's perspective and relate towards other fields and the rest of the society.

The passage from individuality to a collaborative approach at the European scale discussed at the level of practices brings also changes at the organisational level. Actually thinking community wise is a matter of survival in this ever-changing competitive environment. Sharing know-how, experiences and resources within formal and informal organisations is diminishing competence gaps. Professionals recognise their lack of scale to cope with the vast dimension of the European market, thus their need to network, find partners and funding, reflect together and collaborate. The pulverisation of the sector in a myriad of self-employed professionals and micro and small organisations reinforces the need to join efforts.

There are association movements of professionals taking place at the national and local level, many of them interdisciplinary. Creators get together with producers, managers, and technicians to cooperate and develop common platforms of creation, production, training, management and communication. These organisations participate as well in other European and international networks and platforms. These structures and interdependent connections have been assisting artists in their working processes but also taking up the role as representatives and advocates of their interests and needs, not only besides European institutions but also by supporting fellow members at the grassroots and national level.

In this way, the sector's organisations have been feeding and supporting mobility aspirations and competences of professionals and giving it a political voice across borders. Sharing and collaborations are expressed as alternative logics to individualism and competitiveness. These steps might translate an increased political awareness and engagement and a progression towards collective organisation and joint actions.

In addition changes brought by mobility to artists' practices and profiles are also manifest at the level of questioning and reformulating their role in contemporary societies. In this process some artists are assuming within their work their belonging to economical and political frameworks and starting to relate with other sectors and communities whether home or abroad. So the passage from individuality to

communities of interest and practices goes also beyond the sector itself to establish links with other fields of society.

In parallel, some artists when aware of these changes tend to explore transformations caused by their mobility experiences into their own cultural and artistic identities. Moreover many contemporary creators have been prone to get to know different territories and develop projects that are community based and/or social or politically engaged. In response to the lack of means and workspaces, artists are exploring new spaces and roles for art in some cases, developing a closer relationship to audiences. The consciousness and experience of this territorial and social extension is also leading many professionals to discuss and take an open engaged political approach to their art. Their potential political awareness and participation interlinks often the local and the European level simultaneously.

However collective organisation and political participation is demanding. The sector's organisation and structuration at the European level seems to be just at its initial stage. Being an active member implies commitment to common goals and holding adequate resources. It requires the articulation of a complex set of artistic, strategic and communicational competences as well as a fine-tuning between individual and social interests. These abilities are fundamental to make the most out of shared processes in search of a common expression and action. Once more mobility risks accentuating economical and geographical inequalities as members less resourceful or coming from the peripheries of Europe have additional costs to participate in these international circuits and actions.

On the other side, to nurture participation and development of these organisations' mission and procedures to feed into the sector's political affirmation requires permanent investment. Otherwise even informal structures such as networks stagnate and end up consuming a great deal of resources without effective return.

In spite of these barriers and precisely in order to overcome them, performing artists are experiencing and building up a common space for creation, production and dissemination of art works. "*Mobility makes waves*" (Adey 2009), meaning that in most of the cases it implies a change. As a matter of fact, mobility is already bringing

consequences to performing artists' aspirations, practices and profiles, and consequently reshaping artistic outcomes as well artists' position towards their peers and the rest of society.

This common space is not only made of mobility, integration, intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity but also filled with conflicts and inequalities. Its development poses several challenges to the sector, to EU institutions, member states and civil society because it implies structural changes and requires participation and action to be taken up at all levels and by all. Only by nurturing mobility at different dimensions and making available a multitude of material and immaterial means can its access be enlarged and sustained.

CONCLUSIONS: BUILDING UP A COMMUNITY IN EUROPE

Towards a common performing artists' space in Europe

Being free to move and develop one's projects and dreams without boundaries is an ideal that performing artists depict through their work outputs, practices and profiles. However there is a distance in between this freedom as an aspiration and artist's actual ability to move and create across borders.

The promise of mobility captures this prospective freedom. Different than movement, mobility is a potential that depends on the conjugation of individual and institutional aspirations and competences. The concept of mobility is transversal and multiple. It may imply physical and/or virtual movement, yet it actually takes place at the level of mind-sets when interaction across diverse categories occurs. When performing artists speaking various languages or representing diverse disciplines or professional profiles come together to collaborate across these differences. Thus mobility can take place at the world scale, in Europe, just inside our hometown or within our own mind.

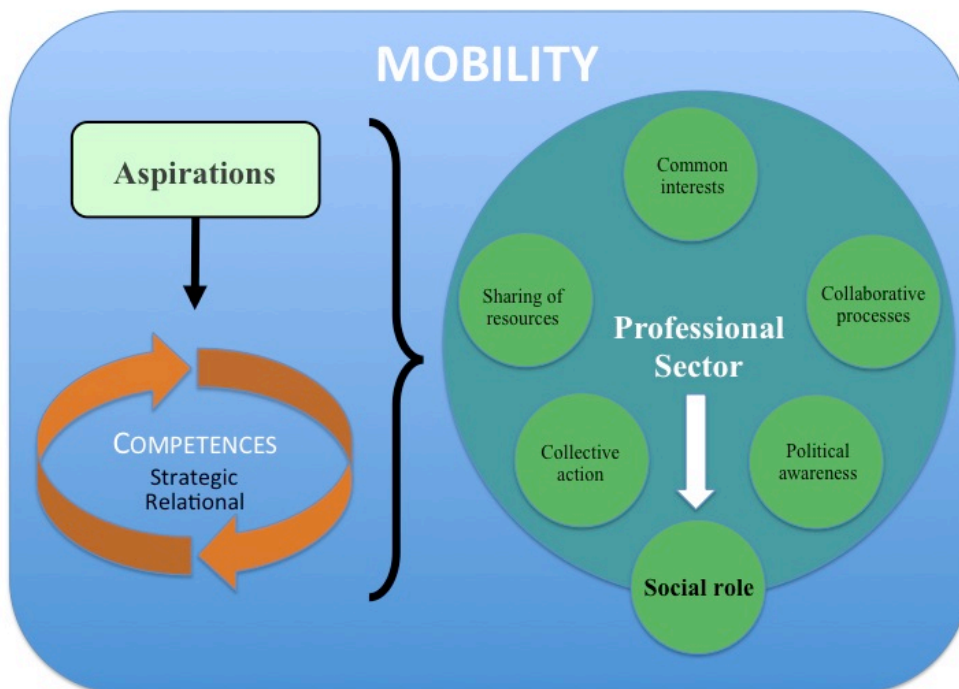


Image n.3 – European performing artists' space

The above Image n.3 intends to illustrate mobility requirements and consequences at individual and institutional level in the performing arts sector.

As a potential, mobility operates like a resource in itself, which access and benefit depends on the possession of suitable resources or capitals. In this respect, mobility can either be a resource for wealth and happiness or for precariousness and sorrow.

Nowadays societies have turned mobility into an increasingly panacea, reflected in different dimensions, from economic globalised labour markets to the EU political integration project. In the case of the performing arts, mobility moved further from a desirable career aspiration and artistic option to become an essential feature of the market re-structuring this professional activity. Thus mobility turned into a demand for all those that wish to survive, be integrated and successful. Performing artists are therefore confined, bound to engage in mobility throughout their careers. As artists' freedom to move and create has been nurtured on the lack of national and professional regulation and consequent absence of a proper social status, the downside is that artists are being drawn into a European scene without safety net.

Therefore, artists' ability to put forward plans and dreams and take the stage and perform in the European scene is dependent on individual educational, economical and social backgrounds and profiles as well as institutional frameworks that shape their projects and action. As the institutional map of Europe is unbalanced, economically and politically, drawing up quite different expectations and resources, mobility might mean either wealth or precariousness within an artist's path. Despite the EU ongoing integration process envisaging coordination of national policies, member-states hold responsibility over areas such as taxation, employment and social affairs that structure labour markets at national level. Therefore EU freedom of movement operates within a puzzle of different national labour markets. Nevertheless there are common trends and features that define as well in parallel a transnational entity, the EU labour market, an enlarged space for work that this research has concentrated on capturing.

To engage in mobility in this wider and more complex scene, artists are required to go further and associate their art (technical competences) with strategic and relational competences that gradually imply changes to their practices and profiles and at the end

of the scale to their artworks too. Moreover, mobility offers a specific setting that shapes and imposes requirements to individuals when putting the above set of competences into action. Mobility requires individuals to transit through and act within multiple frameworks, be those of language, culture, professional practices, artistic disciplines or national administrations. In order to take advantage of diverse opportunities but also to overcome obstacles, artists need to know how to combine different roles and belongings; to live and hope from one community to the other; to relate to different partners. In this logic, artists need not only to master technical, strategic and relational competences but also to be able to put them into action in a dynamic and articulated way within a development perspective.

When going from the individual to the institutional level, looking at the performing arts as a sector, the general atomisation of professionals and social vulnerability make access to mobility a hard job. Only those few holding adequate resources can strive. The sector when poorly regulated and randomly organised does not provide a favourable environment for handling mobility.

Against all odds, along this strenuous way of learning by doing, performing artists ended up meeting each other, sharing resources, collaborating and developing joint processes thus amplifying perspectives and competences. The European stage and the valuable support of ICT have been setting the scene for the gradual development of communities of interest and practices materialised around formal and informal organisations, networks and platforms at national and European level. These organisations are paving the way for the development of the sector collective organisation and alongside the increase of political awareness and collective action. In this process artists are taking up a more engaged stance and role towards economical and social frameworks and linking to other sectors and fields of society. Nowadays there is a gradual involvement of art organisations along other civil society organisations in political debates such as labour conditions, cultural diversity and the environmental agenda, among others. The sector develops awareness and practices to see its social role recognised beyond the mere stage spotlights.

However collective organisation and action is still embryonic as participation and commitment to these organisations is reliant on limited resources. Lack of adequate

competences but also limited institutional conditions lead to the reproduction of social and economic inequalities within the field.

Capacity building of artists and their organisations is crucial to enable the sector to be more efficient and successful in acting within the European space. In this respect, the combination of technical, strategic and relational competences is determinant. Therefore the sector ought to value the learning of this know-how alongside its sharing and coordination. In parallel, these developments need to be monitored and transferred into curricula so education and training match the European work environment.

Moreover in what comes to competences, access and management of information, most especially at the digital level is of key importance. Artists and organisations need to make it a permanent concern and integral feature of their missions and working practices. Professionals have to make visible their actions and experiences so to better and systematically share and exchange their know-how with others. Alongside the work between arts and media professionals would contribute to steadily widen access to information and foster a European public space. Digital tools are optimal media to develop group forming and professionals shall get acquainted with these instruments and be able to take the best out of them. The virtual is a language and an art in itself capable of generating new thoughts, roles and practices about art and interactivity and its relation with other fields and audiences. It allows innovative collaborations and participation of people with limited capacities and/or travelling constraints.

Finally, artists' specific working needs and social rights under a mobility frame need to find an adequate environment at the European level. As a matter of fact current global labour market challenges cannot be dealt at the national level solely. Among them stands the need to ensure a stable common ground for individual flexibility and mobility to be nurtured. To set this agenda forward, EU member-states need to improve the portability of citizen's rights and duties throughout the Union's territory and simultaneously adapt institutions to multiple job holders mobile professionals. These changes shall have in view the set up of a European social status for independent professionals in which artists would see their profile and specific working conditions considered. The need to ease visas and work permits for non-EU citizens travelling to and living and working in the EU should also be taken into account so to enable

circularity of movements and free exchange with the rest of the world. These measures would allow developing an attractive, open and sustainable European labour market for performing artists. Moreover this framework would be transferable to other intellectual and creative professionals, as nowadays their profile and fragile working conditions are getting similar. Precariousness is nowadays shared among different professionals despite high qualifications. Beck calls them “united in decline” (Onghena 2008). Actually the development of a common space for creation and dissemination of art processes and works in Europe is dependent on an increasing interaction and dialogue across all fields of society.

Enduring disparate threats

This research initial question assumed that hindrances to performing artists’ mobility lay beyond legal-administrative barriers to touch individual and institutional aspirations and competences. The capacity to access mobility relies on the resources held by individuals at the economic, educational and social level; but also on societies to create the adequate environments for these resources to flourish.

Though mobility in the EU is a citizen’s acquired right-freedom, its access remains unequal because it tends to reproduce and mirror previous economical, political, social and cultural frameworks. The enlargement of access to mobility requires developments at institutional level that would affect at longer-term individual aspirations and profiles, most especially concerning education and training domain.

Yet change at this level is reliant on a more consensual attitude towards mobility from societies and individuals. Here lies precisely the paradox: mobility is considered either a great chance or a terrible threat. These mixed feelings and fears towards mobility processes and consequences result in contradictory measures and policies. Mobility encloses many hopes and dreams but also suspicions and threats. The emancipation promises it drags along are pursued heartily by some, among them many artists, yet also feared and rejected by numerous others.

The main paradigm mobility puts into question is the nation-state and its institutions. In the European continent, nation-states remain the dominant paradigm in the organisation of citizens' daily lives and projects. Despite the EU project shy advancements, there is a lack of coordination at key policy fields that hinder mobility across member states. In parallel, the lack of progress at institutional level is also mirrored by a tiny presence in the national media and public space. The latter together with education and training systems are determinant to the process of feeding aspirations and building up competences. If mobility is hardly present in these environments then mind-sets and horizons are not pushed further.

The investment in digital literacy and access also plays an essential role in this course. Actually the claim for the fifth freedom, the freedom of knowledge to be added to the four original principles of free movement of persons, capital, services and goods in the EU needs to go beyond the academia sphere to integrate information in general as knowledge.

When approaching cultural dimensions, interaction and coexistence within diversity remains difficult. Competences in this domain are not generalised, as the ability to master different languages and to act within cultural diverse backgrounds. Fruitful communication does not happen *per se* especially if the public is confronted with art works without a familiar context. Artists and artworks may have a role to play to promote participation and dialogue with audiences. Yet in turn, audiences' contribution in interpreting and re-creating further art pieces shall also be recognised and valued, so cultural diversity may become a source of learning.

Otherwise at the same time that cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue are celebrated officially and cultural cooperation slowly gets into the diplomatic agendas, the fear of the stranger and the other grows within the very heart of European societies as nationalistic movements are on the rise. The issue of migrations is another important dimension in which the chance vs. threat paradox is reflected. As EU population diminishes and ages markets realise the need for external supplies. Actually there are mismatches between the type of jobs available and the profiles and interests of the internal workforce. While the EU promotes internal mobility as a chance, member states in face of current raising unemployment, financial crisis and consequent discontent of

populations, hinder entrance conditions to foreigners, as they would represent a menace to local inhabitants. In parallel the media helps to spread these fears and prejudices against outsiders. This national attitude is mirrored at EU level where lacks a clear common policy in this issue, producing contradictory messages in between promotion of mobility and inhibition of immigration.

However, for member states to take this step further, an overall change of mentalities and attitudes in relation to migrations would need to take place. Consequently the whole concept of citizenship should be refunded alongside its legal implications and associated rights. Regulations are running behind actual practices, holding on to paradigms that mobility has been putting into cause.

This action would imply adopting a common pragmatic and positive approach regarding the management of the different migratory flows¹¹⁴. European societies ought to acknowledge and manage their accelerated transition from national pretentiously homogenous groups to multicultural diverse. In the same line, there is a need to renew one-sided integration expectancies and policies to adjust to current circularity of mobility practices that drag along a multiplicity of belongings and responsibilities beyond the mere one-nation affiliations. A growing number of individuals nowadays hop from one community to another, physical and virtual, conjugating different identities and roles. Some are considered officially migrants, as they are living or working in a country different from that of their origin. While others never left their homeland yet still this multiplicity and transient identities characterises their lives. Thus societies need to reflect this flexibility, articulating these different spheres into their regulations and expectations in the same way, as they are already requiring them from individuals within their work.

Simultaneously, in nowadays globalised societies, new debates and practices question the impact of physical displacements, particularly those of the environment and the virtual world. Environmental impact, safety, new social movements contest precariousness and put into cause the mobility paradigm, bringing new questions in between risk and control.

¹¹⁴ Veenkamp (2007).

Actually growing environmental concerns are questioning current ways and means of travel and trying to impose restrictions to carbon emissions while creating alternatives that will necessarily slow down the pace. Virtual and green mobility are new territories where some artists attempt to be creative and explore further. It aims at creating a new awareness and attitude at times when mobility is high on the scale of values and a way of survival.

In the same line, social movements question the skills and competences agenda to be highly dominated by economic goals such as growth, competition and employability. From this point of view education and training purposes are reduced to the requirements of the market responding uniquely to them and leaving aside the mission of individual and collective development and knowledge. In the case of the arts, this discussion is translated into the difficult relationship between artistic creativity and economic goals and the contesting of the promotion of cultural entrepreneurship and the creative industries.

Within this intricate and paradox story full of contradictory aspirations, artists may have a very specific story and role to play. The arts sector needs to stand for its critical perspective and ability to question, re-interpret and propose new narratives and models but societies need to recognise and integrate arts for this specific contribution and provide it with adequate environment to flourish. In this dialectic, artists are confronted in between conditionings imposed by social structures to discipline risk – that mobility potentiates – and the urge to risk-take as a core element of a dynamic innovative society. As individuals and as a group they have to find their own way through this complicated scenario. In this impasse to set out the right targets and manage aspirations, the debate on competences is crucial. Beyond dreams and wishes, those who will be able to actually and effectively connect and act will make the difference.

Notes for further research

Being an exploratory study of a transversal and multidimensional object this research has come across, integrated and raised many new questions and discussions.

The main debate is of paradigmatic and methodological order. The study of artists' mobility has mirrored the need for social scientists to work "across borders" in the same way as artists. In a larger sense, social theory needs to redefine concepts and methods so to acknowledge social phenomena beyond national or single cultural frames. A transdisciplinary approach is fundamental to grasp multiple and interdependent facts, such as European mobility. In this process, it is important to re-structure ways of collecting and analysing data. Individuals do not necessarily fit into a single category any longer. To accumulate or change nationalities, citizenships as well as jobs became more ordinary nowadays. A static definition and division of categories, concepts, territories and disciplines may create obstacles to research within a cross-country environment instead of contributing to clarifying phenomena under study.

At the empirical level, when approaching mobility most researchers face the lack of adequate instruments to measure and analyse circulation and practices across national borders and within the European space. Therefore there is the need to invest on reinventing concepts and tools and carry on long-term regular collection of datasets so to improve the quantitative awareness of the phenomena and in parallel deepen qualitative analysis narrowing the focus of analysis on specific categories and dimensions.

Within a quantitative postulate and goals, there is a need notably to:

- Register intensity, regularity and directions of movements;
- Map social-economic-educational profiles and backgrounds of artists engaged in mobility, notably to clarify and detail categories driving and/or conditioning mobility access;
- Detail on financial and economic costs of mobility experiences;

On the other side, within a qualitative approach, many doors were open throughout this research. The following list comprises hints for further research expecting that any other interested researcher might pick up on this list and write on:

- Explore the features of EU as an alternative labour market in relation to national counterparts
- Test aspirations and competences for mobility within other artistic disciplines as well as other intellectual and creative professionals;
- Investigate further in detail specific competences required by mobility contexts, notably how the articulation between technical-strategic-relational competences operates
- Develop a deeper insight into consequences of mobility on career expectations, working practices and profiles;
- Analyse artists' collective organisation development and action at European level;
- Map consequences of virtual mobility in relation to the definition of the artistic field itself as well as and professional practices and profiles
- Explore multilingualism within artistic processes and works, notably in arts creation, production and dissemination
- Reflect how artistic collaborative processes may engage with audiences and how it may contribute to change the sense of citizenship and cultural belongings;
- Analyse motivations, conditions and consequences of the growing flexibilisation of work on professional profiles and careers as well as live conditions
- Question the potential and limitations of building up a European social status for artists and/or intellectual professionals;

Finally, to pursue further into this field of research, there is a need to involve and articulate the research community alongside authorities and statistic offices as well as the arts sector. All parties need to acknowledge the importance of research and embark on by giving it the necessary thought, means and action.

The link between researchers and arts' professionals is crucial to develop suitable frameworks to collect data and study the sector's mobility processes and outcomes taking into right account its specificities. Moreover, this bond would increase the arts sector's reflectiveness by developing a proper monitoring and evaluation system to

progress in the understanding of artists' mobility needs, notably at education and training level as well as employment and social conditions.

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