
Art Fund response to the Migration Advisory Committee's call for evidence on EEA and non-EEA workers in the UK labour market

October 2017

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Art Fund welcomes the invitation to contribute to the Migration Advisory Committee's (MAC) consultation on EEA and non-EEA workers in the UK labour market as part of their work examining the economic and social impact of the UK's exit from the EU and also on how the UK's immigration system should be aligned with a modern industrial strategy.
- 1.2. Our submission does not respond to the specific questions asked by the Committee, but instead offers high level insight into the possible impacts of leaving the EU on the UK museums workforce.
- 1.3. For further information, please contact Karen Wright, Art Fund's Policy and Public Affairs Manager, at kwright@artfund.org.

2. Who are we?

- 2.1. Art Fund is the national fundraising charity for art. In 2016 alone we gave over £4.5m to help museums and galleries acquire works of art for their collections. We also help museums share their collections with wider audiences by supporting a range of tours and exhibitions, and make additional grants to support the training and professional development of curators. We are independently funded, with the core of our income provided by 123,000 members who receive the National Art Pass and enjoy free entry to over 240 museums, galleries and historic places across the UK, as well as 50% off entry to major exhibitions and subscription to Art Quarterly magazine. In addition to grant-giving, our support for museums includes Art Fund Museum of the Year (won by the Hepworth Wakefield in 2017) and a range of digital platforms, including our crowdfunding platform Art Happens.

3. The impact of Brexit on the current EU museums and galleries workforce in the UK:

- 3.1. It is difficult to fully understand what impact the UK's exit from the EU will have on museums and galleries as there is limited data concerning the nationality of the museums, galleries and libraries 920,000 strong workforce.¹ Unlike other sub-sectors in the creative industries, Government Economic Estimates for museums, galleries and libraries can only be used to suggest that 95.6% of the workforce is from the UK, with 4.4% therefore drawn from outside the UK - including both EU and non-EU nationalities. This is in contrast to other creative industries sub-sector data estimates which can disaggregate workforce data into UK, EU, and non-EU nationalities. Some museums have publicised the composition of their staff in order to highlight their concern over the future status of current EU museum workers in the UK following the withdrawal of freedom of movement: EU nationals make up 20% of staff across a range of different roles with varying skill levels - from curators and researchers to front of house and visitor services - at the National History Museum, 15% at the British

¹ DCMS Sector Economic Estimates 2017: Employment and Trade. Available at < <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/dcms-sectors-economic-estimates-2017-employment-and-trade> > [accessed 20 October 2017].

Museum, and 7% at National Museums Scotland, reflecting the importance of EU nationals across different levels at UK national institutions.²

- 3.2. While the Government's initial offer to EU citizens in June marks progress regarding EU nationals' rights post-Brexit, we are aware that important topics, such as the cut-off date for EU nationals living in the UK to qualify to obtain 'settled status', or EU nationals' rights to access education, healthcare and other benefits post-Brexit, have not yet been finalised.³ We are concerned that any uncertainty over the future of European nationals' rights post-Brexit could result in EU staff and volunteers in UK museums and galleries leaving the UK with their skills and experience in search of security elsewhere.

The impact of Brexit on the future EU workforce in UK museums and galleries

- 3.3. Art Fund responded to the House of Common's Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee's inquiry on the impact of Brexit on the creative industries, tourism and the digital single market inquiry in October 2016. We said that UK museums and galleries will find it challenging to attract and retain European and international talent if applicants perceive that their career paths and opportunities in the UK could be limited by Brexit. This would be of detriment to the UK's museums and galleries as research shows that organisations with greater levels of diversity in their workforce perform better economically as staff have insight into a wider number of markets and a broader skillset, whilst reflecting the multiplicity of our sector's international collections, objects, and audiences.⁴
- 3.4. The BBC reported a spike in hate crime in England and Wales around the time of the EU Referendum.⁵ There is a risk that any increased racism and discrimination towards EU nationals (and also non-EU workers) could damage the UK's reputation as a welcoming and creative destination to live, work and volunteer. This could deter international talent from applying, or continuing, to work and volunteer in UK museums and galleries.
- 3.5. EU regulations and directives currently facilitate a flow of people and cultural objects between EU member states, enabling museums and galleries the opportunity to partner with their European counterparts, to put on tours (such as the Science Museum's Hadron Collider exhibition that toured across France and Australia) and take part in cultural exchanges that contribute to the vibrancy, attractiveness and the reputation of the UK arts sector. These benefits could be placed at risk following the restriction of freedom of movement, and UK museums may find it more difficult to collaborate with their EU counterparts, which could undermine the actual, or perceived, career prospects of working within the UK's arts and cultural sector. We are aware that Prime Minister, Theresa May, said in her Florence Speech that going forwards, the Government wants to continue working with the EU in ways that promote the long-term economic development of the UK which "*includes continuing to take part in those specific policies and programmes which are greatly to the UK and the EU's*

² Steel, Patrick. 2017. National Museums fear Brexit 'Brain Drain'. Available online at <<http://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/news/08022017-fears-of-brexit-brain-drain-national-museums>> accessed 20 October 2017].

³ Home Office, UK Visas and Immigration and Department for Exiting the European Union. (2017). Status of EU citizens in the UK: what you need to know. Available online at < <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/status-of-eu-nationals-in-the-uk-what-you-need-to-know>> accessed 24 October 2017.

⁴ Creative Industries Federation & MOBO, Creative Diversity, 2015. Available online at https://www.creativeindustriesfederation.com/callajax?action=download_pdf&document=559&downurl=https://www.creativeindustriesfederation.com/sites/default/files/2017-06/30183-CIF%20Access%2026%20Diversity%20Booklet_A4_Web%20%281%29%281%29.pdf [accessed 23 October 2017].

⁵ BBC. 2017. Rise in hate crime in England and Wales, 17 October 2017. Available at: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-41648865> [accessed 20 October 2017].

joint advantage, such as those that promote science, education and culture."⁶ We are hopeful that this is a reference to the Creative Europe programme (as well as the Horizon 2020 scheme), which in addition to providing valuable funding to UK institutions, encourages museums to share their skills, ideas and talent across the EU through its partnership requirement for funding.⁷

- 3.6. The Government should continue working closely with museums and galleries to ensure that future immigration restrictions do not undermine the ability of UK museums to attract and retain skilled international talent and partner with their EU counterparts. As recommended in the Creative Industries Federation's Global Talent report, any new system to replace freedom of movement should "*allow the creative industries to recruit top talent...keep costs, administration and waiting times for recruitment and travel to a minimum*" and offer a "*fair immigration system which will help secure reciprocal ease of movement for UK workers abroad.*"⁸ The Federation also states that the visa system for non-EU talent should be amended and improved – especially regarding the £35,000 minimum salary for long-term workers to have indefinite leave to remain under Tier 2 visas. This is an unreachable sum for many staff working in the typically low paid arts and cultural sector to achieve, even with high levels of skill: the UK Government's National Careers Service states that the average starting salary for a full time experienced curator is £25,000.⁹

⁶ PM's Florence speech: A new era of cooperation and partnership between the UK and the EU. 22 September 2017. Available at <<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/pms-florence-speech-a-new-era-of-cooperation-and-partnership-between-the-uk-and-the-eu>> [accessed 20 October 2017].

⁷ For instance, the *Sharing a World of Inclusion* project included collaboration between 11 EU partners to develop new tools and practices to better address the new citizenship regimes within Europe, and help museums to better function within a global context.

⁸ Creative Industries Federation. 2017. Global Talent Report. Available online at <https://www.creativeindustriesfederation.com/sites/default/files/2017-10/GlobalTalent_v10_1.pdf> [accessed 20 October 2017].

⁹ National Careers Service, Museum Curator job profile, available online at <<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/job-profiles/museum-curator>> [accessed 24 October 2017].