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An Comhchoiste um Chultúr, Oidhreacht agus Gaeltacht

Na hEalaíona – Ní Cuma leo

Tuarascáil

Bealtaine 2019

Joint Committee on Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

The Arts Matter

Report

May 2019



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Chairman's Foreword/Réamhrá an Chathaoirligh

The Joint- Committee for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht has a wide remit as is evident in its title. However one key-term missing here is 'the arts' and for fear of giving the impression that the arts may not matter, the Committee took upon itself as part of its 2018 work programme to examine the theme of 'The Arts Matter'. Nine Committee meeting of the Committee accommodated 30 witnesses representing Government Department, arts agencies , both private and public, and individual artists over a period of approximately one year. The witnesses were chosen to represent those areas in particular where the arts were most vulnerable i.e. governance, Irish language, education, music, society, and festivals.

Obviously these witnesses, along with our society at large, are all in agreement that the arts do matter. However, the Committee wished to ask the question that if this is indeed the case, why is it that the arts are still marginalised and very often shoved to the side and away from the mainstream when it comes to funding, educational programming, workers' rights, and wider society in general. The Committee learnt during its deliberations how stretched are those working in the arts, how difficult it can be to set up and access funding programmes, and how the arts are still inaccessible to large tranches of our society in Ireland today.

The report's recommendations reflect the main priorities of those from the arts sector who presented to the

Tá sainchúram leathan ag an gComhchoiste um Chultúr, Oidhreacht agus Gaeltacht mar atá soiléir ina theideal. Tá eochairthearma 'na healaíona' ar iarraidh anseo agus ar eagla go dtabharfadh sé le tuiscint go bhféadfadh nach cás linn na healaíona, ghlac an Coiste air féin mar chuid de chlár oibre 2018 aige chun an téama 'Is Cás Linn na hEalaíona' a scrúdú. D'fhreastail naoi gcuinníú den Choiste ar 30 finné a bhí ag déanamh ionadaíocht ar Ranna Rialtais, gníomhaireachtaí ealaíon, idir phríobháideach agus phoiblí, agus ar ealaíontóirí aonair thar thréimhse bliana, nó mar sin. Roghnaíodh na finnéithe chun ionadaíocht a dhéanamh ar na réimsí sin go háirithe i gcás inar leochailí na healaíona i.e. rialachas, an Ghaeilge, oideachas, ceol, an tsochaí agus féilte.

Is léir gur cás leis na finnéithe ar fad seo, agus lenár sochaí i gcoitinne, na healaíona. Mar sin féin, theastaigh ón gCoiste an cheist a chur, más fíor sin, cén fáth go bhfuil na healaíona imeallaithe go fóill agus go minic á n-aistriú go dtí an taobh agus amach ón bpríomhshruth maidir le maoiniú, cláreagrú oideachasúil, cearta oibrithe agus an tsochaí i gcoitinne. D'fhoghlaim an Coiste le linn a bhreithnithe an brú atá ar dhaoine atá ag obair sna healaíona, cé chomh deacair is atá sé cláir mhaoinithe a bhunú agus a rochtain, agus an chaoi nach féidir le tráinsí móra dár sochaí in Éirinn inniu fós teacht ar na healaíona.

Léiríonn moltaí na tuarascála príomhthosaíochtaí na ndaoine ó earnáil na n-ealaíon a chuaigh i láthair

Committee. These concerned, in the main: stronger commitment at Government policy level, greater arts officer presence across more local and regional areas, ample funding for arts funding bodies, initiatives in education, access to the arts by all, stronger arts strategies for Irish language, arts education from early age, and improved tax incentives to assist those wishing to contribute to the arts.

The following sections of this report provide the background to and summaries of the discussions which took place at the meetings. The final section provides a summary of the final Committee meeting on the topic when four contemporary artists provided the Committee with their observations on why the arts mattered to them. The arts matter because we matter; they make us both visible and audible. Furthermore the arts make an invaluable contribution to our society and the wider world around us. It is not difficult to increase funding as it only takes a Government decision to do so; a decision to fund its own citizens to make art in its own country. Making art fuels the imagination and it is the imagination that shapes our future. Without the arts where will that future be and our place in it?

an Choiste. Bhain siad seo go príomha le tiomantas níos láidre ag leibhéal beartais an Rialtais, láithreacht níos mó ag oifigigh ealaíon i gceantair áitiúla agus réigiúnacha, go leor maoinithe do chomhlachtaí maoinithe ealaíon, tionscnaimh san oideachas, rochtain ar na healaíona do chách, straitéisí ealaíon níos láidre don Ghaeilge, oideachas ealaíon ó aois an-óg, agus dreasachtaí cánach feabhsaithe chun cabhrú leo siúd ar mian leo cur leis na healaíona.

Tugann na hailt seo a leanas den tuarascáil seo cúlra agus achoimrí ar na díospóireachtaí a tharla ag na cruinnithe. Tugann an chuid deiridh achoimre ar an gcruinniú deiridh Coiste ar an ábhar nuair a thug ceathrar ealaíontóirí comhaimseartha a dtuairimí don Choiste faoin gcúis gur cás leo na healaíona. Is cás linn na healaíona mar is cás linn sinn féin; cuireann siad faoi deara go bhfeictear agus go gcloistear sinn araon. Ina theannta sin cuireann na healaíona go mór lenár sochaí agus leis an domhan mór. Ní deacair maoiniú a mhéadú mar ní gá ach cinneadh Rialtais chun é sin a dhéanamh; cinneadh chun a shaoránaigh féin a mhaoiniú chun ealaín a dhéanamh ina dtír féin. Cuireann ealaín an tsamhlaíocht chun cinn agus is í an tsamhlaíocht a chruthaíonn ár dtodhchaí. Gan na healaíona cá mbeidh an todhchaí sin agus ár n-áit ann?

An Teachta Dála Aengus Ó Snodaigh,
Cathaoirleach
15 Bealtaine 2019

1. Main Recommendations

Government Policy

- 1.** There is a need to commitment at Government policy level to longitudinal research in arts participation, which would provide real evidential data on the impact of the creative arts for all of society in building informed strategies to meet the needs of a changing society.
- 2.** Local authorities and local authority arts officers should have greater representation across the State's sixteen education and training boards.
- 3.** Restore staff and funding to arts funding bodies, representative organisations, and individual artists to 2008-09 levels.
- 4.** Release a substantial part of funding promised by the Taoiseach in December 2017 when he reaffirmed Government's commitment to double funding of the arts over a seven year period.
- 5.** In light of the European Commission having stated that the UK would no longer be eligible to have a host city as part of the European city of culture, the Irish Government and culture bodies in the Republic need to lend their support in assisting Derry and Belfast in any potential joint-bid for the event after Brexit.
- 6.** Provide a new examination of models of intervention throughout the primary and secondary school cycles that will result in stronger 'art literacy' in order that artists' contribution to education can be further understood, valued and acknowledged.
- 7.** Put in place a plan supporting creativity in education and ensuring that all music traditions present throughout the school curriculum assist school children in terms of development and confidence building.
- 8.** The recent growth of interest in STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and maths) is an integral part of the Irish economy and should be strengthened by the inclusion of 'Arts' to the acronym (STEAM) and as a result extra points to be applied to arts subjects in the Irish Leaving Certificate.

9. All Government departments should “mainstream” arts/culture considerations in their policy and measures, and not to have all arts/culture matters siloed in one government department only.

Education

10. Immediate steps to be taken by the Department of Education and Skills to establish a more structured approach to music education partnerships guaranteeing that all children receive a quality music education regardless of their socioeconomic background or the part of the country in which they grow up.
11. Regulation to be put in place in the music education industry in order to ensure standards and equity of provision for all who study music in the country.
12. Continue to roll out co-departmental initiatives in guaranteeing that every Irish child will be musically literate, and/or have access to such, without having to depend solely on proximity to music classes or affordability of musical instruments.
13. Intervention at primary school level to support primary teachers in providing music education and/or to employ specialist music teachers.

An Ghaeilge

14. Go bhféachfaí ar na healaíona mar dhlúthchuid den phróiseas náisiúnta pleanála teanga.
15. Go gcuirfeadh An Chomhairle Ealaíon deireadh láithreach le h-iarraíais i nGaeilge a aistriú go Béarla mar chuid den bpróiseas measúnachta do dheontais.
16. Go ndéanfaidh an Chomhairle Ealaíon maoiniú mar is ceart ar na healaíona Gaeilge chun ealaíontóirí, scríbhneoirí, léiritheoirí, aisteoirí agus déantúsóirí le Gaeilge a mhealladh ar ais i dtreo na healaíona Gaeilge.

17. Go dtiocfadh roinnt de na heagraíochta ealaíona Gaeilge le chéile chun comhiarratais a ullmhú ar mhaoiniú as a mbainfeadh tograí i nGaeilge an tairbhe is mó.
18. Maoiniú mar is ceart a dhéanamh ar na healaíona Gaeilge chun ealaíontóirí a mhealladh ar ais i dtreo na nEalaíona Gaeilge.
19. Bíodh maoiniú ar leith d'eagraíocht a bhunú nach mbeadh ach mar dhualgas air ach reachtáil na n-ealaíon uile Gaeilge sa tír.
20. Réimse iomlán na n-ealaíon trí Ghaeilge a bheith ar fáil do phobail na Gaeilge ina bpobail féin, agus ealaíona trí Ghaeilge le forbairt sna pobail nua Ghaeilge atá ag teacht chun cinn sa tír.

Young People

21. Provide for the need for a separate production award and a commissioning process for artists with disabilities to create new work for children, young people and their families.
22. The three key-departments with responsibility for the arts, Departments of the Taoiseach, Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, and Education and Skills to adopt a joined-up approach in the development and implementation of the Arts Council's Creative Youth Plan by setting up a development unit, or support for a similar resource.

Society

23. Amend tax legislation to allow tax benefits for private citizens who donate to arts organizations.
24. Strengthen and further develop the passing on of art forms from one generation to the next in order to avoid the dying out of such forms when an artist passes.
25. In order to increase provision of audio description and captioning for the hard of hearing and seeing a nationwide network of key hubs should be established with such provision.

Access

- 26.** Identify a network of national performance venues where audio description, captioning and Irish Sign Language (ISL) could be made available as well as suggesting parameters for the provision of access at commercial arts venues.

Arts Festivals

- 27.** Arts Festivals should be supported to produce new work and further develop them as showcases for Irish work.
- 28.** Encourage much stronger co-ordination of arts festivals in order to facilitate programming and administration in enticing authors to come and attend and in recruiting volunteers.

2. Introduction

The Joint Committee on Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (“the Committee”) discussed the issue of ‘Why the Arts Matter’ under several different themes. Representatives from various bodies, and individuals, from the arts met with the Committee over several meetings during 2018 and early 2019 to discuss the arts in Ireland today under the following themes:

- Governance and Funding in the Arts
- The Arts and Education
- Na hEalaíona agus an Ghaeilge
- Music in Ireland Today
- The Arts for All
- National Arts festivals
- The Creative Ireland programme
- Why the Arts Matter – General Observations

A list of these meetings and those who engaged with the Committee is provided in [Appendix 1](#). All who addressed the Committee on these various themes provided opening statements after which discussions took place between them and Committee members. Links are provided in each of the sections to the witnesses opening statements and transcripts of summary of the interactions with Committee members.

3. Summary of Submissions and Discussion with Committee Members

3.1 Governance in Funding in the Arts

Members of the Arts Council and the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht met with the Committee on 17th January 2018 to discuss the theme of Governance in Funding of the Arts.

3.1.1 Arts Council

The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon¹ (“the Council”) is the national agency for funding, developing and promoting the arts in Ireland today. It is not a regulatory body and sees its role, in the main, as providing best practice advice and support to those involved in arts and those who create them. The Council plays a significant role in developing and funding all forms of the arts in Ireland through grants and awards. Its current strategy (Arts Council Strategy 2016-2025²), describes how the Council works strategically in fulfilling its statutory remit through a policy-driven focus on investment, advice, advocacy and partnership. It achieves this through its internal Strategic Development Department which works both internally and externally in supporting the ‘development agency’ aspects of its work.

In describing to the Committee how it addressed governance of its funding, Council representatives referred to the three main stages of its funding process: ‘application’, ‘assessment’ and ‘decision-making’. They further described the decision-making stage which consists of three further assessment stages: a Council plenary panel (for annual or multi-

¹ <http://www.artscouncil.ie/home/>

² <http://www.artscouncil.ie/arts-council-strategy/>

annual funded organisations), a peer panel (for individual and project grants) and an executive panel (travel, training and small festivals grants). All applications are scored against clearly laid-out application criteria in order to facilitate applicants in better understanding the final decisions regarding their applications.

Conditions of financial assistance and financial reporting are laid out clearly, as are specific conditions relating to governance which include compliance at all times with governance arrangements based on specific principles related to strategy, and compliance with statutory obligations. These conditions also refer to actions to be taken where any board or staff member behaves illegally or is in breach of policies and/or procedures. In addition, an independent auditor is engaged for all grants over €100k to ensure public money is managed properly and is providing value for money for the tax payer.

In its role as a non-regulatory body the Council provides best-practice advice and published '*A Practical Guide for Board Members of Arts Organisations*' in 2016, and in the same year ran a governance seminar where a draft Constitution to support organisations to comply with Charities Legislation and the Companies Act was developed. Other documentation, including a Governance Transparency Code are also available from the Council and organisations in receipt of Council funding are compelled to sign up to these documents.

A copy of the Arts Council's Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-01-17_opening-statement-orlaith-mcbride-arts-council_en.pdf

3.1.2 Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht³ is responsible for the promotion and protection of Ireland's heritage and culture, the advancement and use of the Irish language, and the sustainable development of the islands. In achieving these aims and goals, it funds a number of state bodies and agencies with responsibilities relating to various aspects of its remit, including the arts, and works with these bodies and agencies to ensure a co-ordinated approach in fulfilling its mandate. It is also a co-sponsor of two of the six cross-border implementation bodies established under the terms of the British-Irish Agreement Act 1999.

In their Opening Statement to the Committee, officials from the Department's Culture Division, which is responsible for overseeing the cultural services of the State, outlined how its culture services are in the main delivered by agencies through which departmental funding is channelled. A programme budget of almost €130m, and a capital budget provision of just under €30m was allocated for 2018. Officials referred to the agencies under its remit in receipt of funding mentioning that the Arts Council was in receipt of the Division's funding allocation in 2018. The Arts Act 2003⁴ enables the Minister to set the overall policy framework for the arts in the State and abroad in addition to providing Arts Council funding.

The Department described to members recent successes of the Creative Ireland⁵ programme launched in 2016 and how it served as a learning opportunity for the Department in exploring new policy areas, making new connections, and collaboration across different government departments

³ <https://www.chg.gov.ie/about/>

⁴ Arts Act 2003: <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2003/act/24/enacted/en/html>

⁵ Creative Ireland is a five-year all-Government culture-based initiative that emphasises the importance of human creativity for individual, community and national wellbeing through developing, encouraging and facilitating initiatives and policies that enable participation in creative activity at all stages of life: <https://creativeireland.ie/en/about>

and agencies from which the arts in general are benefiting. Its objectives extend across the full remit of the Department's functions and those of its agencies. It further described how it saw Creative Ireland as looking towards the future and having a major role in developing the imagination and creative skills of future workers in the arts.

Governance between the Department and its agencies is assured through legislation and policy and executed through annual funding letters, performance delivery agreements and annual oversight agreements. In addition, certain conditions are also applied to agency funding and these include compliance with public financial procedures and spending codes, the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies, national and EU procurement rules and procedures, and other circulars issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and reform. Compliance tracking and monitoring is also carried by the ongoing interaction between the Culture Division and its agencies in these areas.

A copy of the Department's Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-01-17_opening-statement-feargal-o-coigligh-department-of-culture-heritage-and-the-gaeltacht_en.pdf

3.1.2 Discussion with Committee Members

Governance

The Committee's interest in inviting the Arts Council and the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht was in the context of the arts sector having been rocked in the months preceding the meeting by allegations of bullying and harassment. Members were interested therefore in looking at what could be done to strengthen the protections that exist for workers in

the arts sector. One such protection proposed during the discussion concerned the withdrawal of funds from an organisation which was not fulfilling its responsibilities according to employment law and adjudicated not to be doing so by an independent organisation, such as the Workplace Relations Commission.

The Arts Council explained that, while not being a regulator, it had a very detailed set of conditions and financial systems which had to be accepted by any organisation being offered Council funding, and it provided detailed guidelines around governance and what organisations must have in place. The bodies that it funds are companies limited by guarantee where board members are responsible for running their organisation in accordance with the governance standards that the Council clearly sets out in its conditions of financial assistance.

With regard to the frequency of Arts Council Board appointments, it was explained to Committee members how the process is clearly outlined in the Act; the Minister, through the Public Appointments Service, appoints the recommended members to the board. Five-year appointments are made on a split basis whereby half of the board steps down every two and half years. Members are selected in line with the criteria and a shortlist is prepared with strict governance procedures around conflicts of interest.

Over-regulation and administrative burden was an issue for Committee members and while it is accepted by all that regulation is necessary it was important to note, in this regard, that a lot of small voluntary organisations are stretched to the limit in terms of time and resources. In some Committee members' view, they are in many instances over-regulated in trying to comply with the rules of companies limited by guarantee, constitutions and Garda clearance. The strong concern was

that if they continue to be squeezed, a lot of people will walk away from the rural and local voluntary organisations with which they are involved.

Funding

Members were interested in hearing from the Arts Council on the governance of funding and clarification was sought on the representation of any particular socioeconomic cohort when it came to considering funding allocations. The Council explained that its funding processes were open in the sense that the application sets the criteria and the best application that meets those criteria is awarded. In recent years, new elements have been gradually introduced into the decision-making process to include funding directed towards areas of deprivation, geographic spread, and gender balance. Overall however, the Council is satisfied that there is widespread equitable funding distribution throughout the country, as is evident from its list of funding decisions over the years.

With regard to inspections of multi-annual funded organisations in verifying that funding has been spent according to the prospectus, the Committee was informed that an auditor employed by the Arts Council visits some of the organisations it has funded to verify funding spend and ensure conditions are being adhered to. However on the issue of withdrawal of funding, where there may have been breaches in the protection of workers' rights, it was the Council's view that, in general, a better approach would be, from the outset, to build such protections in to the culture of the organisation through the provision of workshops with arts organisations around the country, encouraging and ensuring that best practices, policies and procedures are in place. The Department confirmed that it also would be in favour of any proposals along these lines. (See also 'Protecting Workers' Rights').

With regard to grant applications, and the time it took to process them, the Council explained that the turnaround for applications depended on the type of application. Small applications can be turned around relatively quickly but those looking for significant sums of money take approximately 16 weeks from the date of receipt of the application. From the Council's perspective almost 80% of its internal resource is spent on funding and reductions in staff of one-third in recent years has meant less time available for thinking and imagining how the process can be developed to support artists and arts organisations over the next ten years.

In terms of the nature of projects to be funded, participatory arts, i.e. arts activities happening in different communities and locations, are set as a priority. An example of this is the large sum of money invested in Arts & Disability Ireland in recent years which has transformed the capacity of people with disabilities to access the arts. Funding has also been prioritised for children and young people, and has increased from 15 organisations annually to 30 as part of a new strategic funding programme. These organisations work with children and young people in areas of disadvantage and rural communities involved with youth theatre and dance. Also the new Creative Schools programme will reach into 150 schools around the country in 2018. Schools identified for the programme participate in delivering equality of opportunity in schools, DEIS, scheme, as well as in rural, urban and Irish language communities.

The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht explained how it provides capital support primarily and cited the West Cork Arts Centre as an example of a major investment by the Department in recent years. The other arm of the State which the Department supports is the strengthening of the role of arts, culture and creativity in the local government sector. An example of this is artists' space (including exhibition and studio space) and the great effort put in by local authorities

in trying to identify such spaces for arts development at local community level.

Arts Council funding for multiannual projects can continue if they remain relevant, produce work, engage with the public and be the best they can. The discussion between the Arts Council and the Department with the Committee highlighted the issue in recent years of new organisations 'knocking on the funding door' but not being able to get in because of the unavailability of additional resources. Members learnt, however, that the Council reformed its funding framework in 2018 and set up two new funding schemes - strategic funding and arts grants funding. The arts grants funding scheme was being established to ensure organisations that might have received a small amount of project funding this year, that will receive none the following year and a small amount the year after that will now be able to receive funding on a more regular basis to produce work. The Council was of the view that there should be a change of emphasis in the percentage of funding where a larger allocation of the overall fund should be given to smaller and emerging artists on an ongoing basis. By the same token an organisation in receipt of smaller amounts of funding should not be asked to report on the same level as an organisation in receipt of large amounts of funding.

Artists' Dole

Mention was made to the "artists' dole" as a pilot scheme. The Committee heard that many artists say they are living hand-to-mouth and are very much dependent on the jobseeker's allowance, but they have the indignity of having to apply for it every time they finish a commission, and it is therefore very much affected by the uneven nature of their work. Department officials informed members that the artists scheme in the Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection was scheduled to be reviewed after one year but the Department did not believe a huge

number of artists were availing of the scheme which is focused on visual artists and writers and this needed further consideration in any review.

Protecting Workers' Rights

In ensuring that workers in the arts sector are protected, it was the Council's view that this was not necessarily the role of the independent audit nor of an inspectorate process but should instead be built into the culture of the organisation. The Arts Council has played a role in this regard in having provided a series of workshops to arts organisations around the country in ensuring that best policies and procedures were in place to protect workers against any kind of discrimination, bullying or harassment. In its view, working with organisations to ensure that that is built into the culture of the organisation is much more effective than using an inspectorate-type process to ensure that it is in place.

Representatives from the Department described how a former Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht had met representatives of the eight theatres who had signed a statement on the abuse of power and harassment where it was agreed that the Department would assist the sector in coming forward with proposals that might help to deal with this issue of organisational culture. Arising out of that meeting, the Irish Theatre Institute, which offers support services to the industry, has worked to develop a number of proposals to put forward a positive engagement in terms of what the sector could do. This would be a theatre sector initiative which, while not being controlled by the Department, would be supported by it.

Creative Ireland Programme

Following a question from a Committee member on the Creative Ireland programme, the Department explained that this programme was not a

separate entity or organisation but a Government initiative working within the Department as part of its budget and was not in any way to be seen as a rival to the Arts Council. The ambition of the Government through the Creative Ireland programme is to make arts, culture and creativity more central to all Departments and to lead to greater collaboration between different government departments and external bodies. A significant element of funding goes to local authorities and funds arts officers, heritage officers, librarians and archivists. Further information on the Creative Ireland programme is provided at [Section 3.7](#) of this report.

Aosdána

Members heard that Aosdána was set up by the Arts Council in 1981 to honour artists whose work has made an outstanding contribution to the creative arts in Ireland, and to encourage and assist members in devoting their energies fully to their art. Discussion took place with members on the Cnuas stipend, designed to assist artists in devoting their energies fully to their work, as practically as possible. The award of the Cnuas grant was described as one of the very best ways the Council has of supporting artists in their middle and later years. The Council emphasised to the Committee, in no uncertain terms, that the stipend had never been under question or threat. While the Council was in ongoing discussions with Aosdána about a certain amount of reform of the system in general whereby people would be elected or invited to join, it remained completely committed to the Cnuas stipend, which it regarded as sacrosanct.

Irish Language and the Arts

Ealaíon na Gaeltachta Teo.⁶ was set up to implement an Arts Plan for the Gaeltacht. It is funded jointly by the Arts Council and Údarás na Gaeltachta. Three Arts Officers are employed in the various Gaeltacht regions (Connacht and Co. Meath, Munster and Donegal) to assist and encourage artists and arts organisations to develop arts projects and to further their artistic careers. While funding for Ealaíon na Gaeltachta was absolutely essential, the question was raised as to what Irish language policy was in effect as it relates to the arts, the Department and the Arts Council. Members expressed disappointment that the national theatre had not produced an Irish language production in almost 20 years, and the question was raised, from a policy and Government perspective, as to why national organisations were not being encouraged to do more work through the medium of Irish.

The Department in response said it was going to integrate as far as was practically possible Bliain na Gaeilge and the Creative Ireland programme and that local authorities will be asked to ensure they make provision for events to help to develop their Creative Ireland programmes through the cultural teams as part of Bliain na Gaeilge. The Arts Council for its part met with Foras na Gaeilge for clarification on their respective responsibilities and to then look at ways in which they could support each other and work together in assisting the arts through Irish.

Further information on Irish language and the arts is provided at [Section 3.3](#) of this report.

A transcript of the discussion held with the Joint Committee is available on the Committee's website at:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/debateRecord/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/2018-01-17/debate/mul@/main.pdf

⁶ <http://www.ealain.ie/>

3.2 The Arts in Education

Representatives from six different bodies, including the Arts Council above, came before the Committee on 14th February 2018 to discuss the theme of education and the arts.

3.2.1 National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (the NCCA)⁷ is a statutory body working with learners, teachers, practitioners, and parents to develop research-based curriculum and development. It provides advice to the Minister for Education and Skills on curriculum and assessment for education across all layers up to the end of the secondary cycle. Its research consists of active engagement with a wide range of agencies and stakeholders in the education sector, and consideration of international practice, with a view to developing and reviewing curricula. However NCCA is not directly involved in the implementation of curriculum change in schools and other settings as these are directed by the Department of Education and Skills.

In its submission to the Committee, members the NCCA stressed the importance of education in the arts to the education project itself. Knowing the arts and practising them is an essential ingredient to the full and healthy development of the minds and spirits of children and young people and therefore cannot be separated from their overall education experience. The arts therefore, have always been viewed by the NCCA as an essential curriculum area in early childhood, primary and post-primary education. It cited as an example, the newly introduced Framework for Junior Cycle which includes '*Creativity and Innovation*' as one of the eight guiding principles of junior cycle programmes.

⁷ <https://www.ncca.ie/en>

Other examples of arts in education development provided by the NCCA include *Aistear*, an early childhood curriculum for children from birth to 6 years where children can explore rich learning environments, indoors and outdoors, in a multi-sensory manner. *Aistear Síolta Practice Guide*⁸ is an online resource to support practitioners in using *Aistear* and *Síolta*. Parts of the *Aistear* framework, which readily lends itself to the creation of an arts-rich environment as reflected in the practice guide, has many practical supports available to practitioners such as videos and podcasts on supporting arts within the early years curriculum.

The current primary school curriculum promotes guided discovery learning and active learning in striking a balance between children having opportunities to explore and express ideas and experiences, and opportunities to experience and respond to music, drama and visual arts. Recent years have seen the introduction to primary schools of the further integration of education in the arts across the curriculum at infant level.

While 'Art' has always been a subject on the post-primary curriculum, education in the arts features across a wide range of subjects across the post-primary curriculum and in many schools it features strongly in the Transition Year and the Leaving Certificate Applied programmes. In September 2017 a new Junior Cycle Visual Art specification was introduced focusing on the elements of critical and visual language, drawing, visual culture and appreciation, and also includes an area on art elements and design principles and media. In addition there has also been the development in recent years of short courses in performance art at junior cycle where schools can design their own 100 hour short course. A new Leaving Certificate specification for Art is also in the final stages of development.

⁸ <https://www.ncca.ie/en/early-childhood/aistear-siolta-practice-guide>

In light of these new initiatives and other further developments, NCCA stressed to the Committee the importance of continuing professional development of teachers. NCCA works closely with its partners in developing the Junior Cycle for Teachers (JCT) and Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) to support the introduction of new courses in Visual Art, and Music and Artistic Performance. It also collaborates with a range of arts and culture bodies and agencies to advocate for the promotion of the arts in education. Therefore from its perspective, there is a commitment to the arts as a central area of education for the 21st century learner and it believes that recent curriculum developments and collaborations provide evidence of that continuing commitment. Ongoing and future curriculum review offers everyone the opportunity to advocate for further innovation and improvement in provision for education in the Arts.

A link to the Council's Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-02-14_opening-statement-national-council-for-curriculum-and-assessment-ncca_en.pdf

3.2.2 National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals

The National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals ("NAPD")⁹ was established in 1997 to represent principals and deputy principals from Irish secondary schools and provide them with a voice on issues of common concern. It ensures that its members are represented on relevant and local national bodies and it has become a major partner in Irish education through its structure which consists of a 22-strong executive committee, a network of nine regional branches, and a range of sub-

⁹ <http://www.napd.ie/history-of-the-napd/>

committees working on specific areas of education. NAPD has consultative status with the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (see [section 3.2.1](#) of this report) and representation on a wide range of social and cultural organisations.

In presenting its main activities to Committee members, NAPD described the establishment of a Arts Culture and Heritage sub-committee in 2000 which has been working towards the development of the arts and creativity in education and has helped inform and support many arts initiatives in education up to the present time. Its Creative Engagement 'arts in education programme', co-funded by the Departments of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, and Education and Skills, was developed to heighten awareness and create a culture of dynamic interaction with the arts in schools. Each year, projects are produced in schools ranging from theatre and film through to sculpture and music. The point was made that creative engagement comes about when a local artist or arts group comes into a school and imparts their skills, knowledge and enthusiasm to the students resulting in mutual benefits to both artist and school. This initiative was followed in 2008 with the participation of NAPD in the preparation and publication of *Points of Alignment*, published by the Arts Council that paved the way for the 2013 *Arts in Education Charter* (see also [section 3.2.3](#) of this report). NAPD also contributed to the development and launch of the Arts in Education Portal and is a participant on its editorial board. NAPD supported and joined the effort to create Encountering the Arts Ireland¹⁰ Ltd and has taken part in the development of the New Junior Certificate including the Short Courses.

Over the past 12 years NAPD has been actively encouraging schools to develop their Arts Plan. This anticipated the ideas contained in the *Arts in*

¹⁰ <http://etai.ie/index.php/home/>

Education Charter and placed an emphasis on the role of the arts within schools. All Creative Engagement schools have to initiate or produce an arts policy as part of their application for funding. An Annual Creative Engagement exhibition is held each year to celebrate and display the project work of the schools and provide a forum to share their experiences with others.

NAPD set out, for the Committee, how it envisions an education system where schools are energised through the arts. In its view, this can be achieved through the core recognition of the centrality of the arts in education, and where schools work with NAPD towards the establishment of a national strategy for the arts in post-primary education and through the implementation of the *Arts in Education Charter* and ensuring NAPD representation on all bodies charged with the development of the arts in education. Furthermore, government support should be made available to provide continued leadership in schools in order to promote the centrality of creativity in education. The NAPD Arts and Culture Committee continues to advocate for the greater inclusion of the arts in education and strongly supports the ongoing development of Creative Engagement as a flagship arts in education programme in Irish schools.

A link to the Association's Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-02-14_opening-statement-dermot-carney-arts-officer-national-association-of-principals-and-deputy-principal-napd_en.pdf

3.2.3 Arts in Education Charter Implementation Group

The *Arts in Education Charter* is a joint initiative of the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and was launched in 2013. It is underpinned by a Memorandum of Understanding between these two government departments and works

in association with the Arts Council. Members learnt of its success in integrating arts in education through the ongoing implementation of its nineteen objectives as reflected in the Action Plan for Education 2016 - 2019.

The Charter envisages that schools, in their policies and plans, shall incorporate arts in education opportunities as an important aspect of enriching the curriculum and the wider life of the school. Members were told that the Implementation Group had an agreement with the school inspectorate to assist schools in this aspect of their school planning and self-evaluation. The Group has also obtained the support of the Department of Education and Skills that provision for arts in education practice will be reflected in the design and equipping of school buildings. The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment has established reciprocal partnership with the Arts Council in the promotion of the arts in schools, as set out in the Charter.

The Implementation Group expressed its view to Committee members that the last few years had seen the forging of a culture change, whereby a new era is opening where the arts are becoming part of the core dimension of young Irish people's holistic education. Collaborative mutual respect, and co-operation of all agencies involved, is required to sustain this momentum. Implementing the Arts in Education Charter is seen therefore as a work in progress and the Department of Education and Skills is working closely with colleagues in the Department of Culture Heritage and the Gaeltacht, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, the Arts Council and the Creative Ireland team in implementing a number of exciting measures in that programme, several of which are contained in the Arts in Education Charter. These measures include:

- *The Arts in Education Portal*¹¹: a national digital resource for arts in education in Ireland, with over 125,000 visitors since its introduction and with over 36,500 ongoing users made up in the main artists/teachers/schools/stakeholder communities). There have been 4,236 video views and 742 newsletter subscribers. The Portal allows for two-way involvement, as contributors and receivers, with a focus on quality.
- *Exploring Teacher Artist Partnership*: This is a Department of Education and Skills' initiative led by the Association of Teacher Education Centres of Ireland in partnership with Encountering the Arts Ireland (see also [section 3.2.4](#) of this report) and the Association for Creativity in Arts Education¹² representing individual teachers and support service personnel with a particular interest in the arts and arts education. The Committee learnt how artists and teachers are trained to work in partnership within formal primary education and that in 2017, 302 teachers and 80 artists were trained in 20 Education Centres. It is hoped to train 3,260 teachers and 652 Artists in Teacher Artist Partnership by 2022 across the 21 full-time Education Centre areas.
- *Arts in Junior Cycle*: This initiative consists of a series of continuing professional development experiences for teachers to enhance engagement with the arts and learning in Junior Cycle. It embodies the principles and key skills which underpin the Framework for Junior Cycle and the Arts in Education Charter. The National Digital Mapping of Arts in Education provision and activity throughout the country commenced in 2017 under funding from Dormant Accounts.

¹¹ www.artsineducation.ie

¹² <https://acae.ie/>

The technical enhancements to enable the mapping on the Digital Map of the Arts in Education Portal have been completed. Some population of the Digital Map was completed by the end of 2017 and the remaining data population of the National Digital Map will be completed in 2018. This mapping of Arts in Education integration will be updated annually going forward.

- *National Arts in Education Research Repository*: One of the objectives of the Arts in Education Charter was promoting Arts Education and Arts in Education Research and the establishment and development of a National Arts in Education Research Repository. A research repository is essential to provide visibility for the discipline area, and to provide for accessible and open access to data and for the preservation of research data in the field. The Repository is hosted by Digital Repository of Ireland (DRI) on behalf of the Arts in Education Charter and the Department of Education and Skills.
- *Arts Rich Schools (ARÍS)*: The Arts in Education Charter makes provision for this programme which aims to incentivise both primary and post-primary schools to foster and develop the arts in wider elements of school life. This concept has now become Scoileanna Ildánacha/Creative Schools which is now a Creative Ireland funded initiative (Creative Youth Pillar 1). Schools will have access to Creative Associates, who are a mixture of artists and teachers who will help them develop individual plans to help understand and reinforce the impact arts has on creativity and learning.
- *Local Arts Education Partnerships (LAEPs)*: An objective of the Arts in Education Charter was the establishment of Local Arts Education Partnerships. The impact of co-operative efforts by the statutory

agencies, the local authorities and the ETBs, in conjunction with the Regional Education Centres and other agencies, have the potential to re-shape the landscape of arts in education provision in Ireland to the benefit of young people throughout the country. Creative Ireland's *Creative Youth* plan has committed to the establishment of three Local Creative Youth Partnerships (LCYPs) on a pilot basis in 2018.

3.2.4 Encountering the Arts Ireland

Encountering the Arts Ireland (ETAI)¹³ is an alliance of organisations and individuals committed to arts and education with a focus on children and young people in Ireland. It represents a diverse range of arts and cultural organisations working with education providers. The aim of the organisation is to act as an advocate for greater collaboration and alignment in policy between organisations and government agencies in order to provide children and young people with sustained opportunities in the arts and culture in and out of school.

In providing expertise and skills across a range of areas, ETAI aims to broaden and deepen children's and young people's access, creation, participation and engagement in the arts by using the combined strength, resources and expertise of the alliance. It is also committed to fostering greater strategic alignment of arts and education policies in Ireland identifying new synergies for sustained engagement for all children and young people in the arts and culture. The organisation also provides platforms and opportunities for the voice of the child and young person to be heard.

¹³ <http://etai.ie/index.php/home/>

ETAI has also acted as a network organisation and as advisers to some key initiatives including the Arts in Education Charter, Creative Ireland and Culture 2025, often producing submissions and position papers on behalf of its membership. It is also a member of the various arts in education partnerships referred to throughout this report as well as preparing a detailed research proposal, which focuses on formal, informal and non-formal learning arts and cultural learning in schools and youth work settings. This research aims to identify approaches to assessing sustainable quality arts and cultural engagement by children and young people. In its submission to the Committee, ETAI provided a number of recommendations related to the Arts in Education Charter, Research, Continuous Professional Development, Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, and national fora.

A link to Encountering the Arts Ireland's Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-02-14_opening-statement-encountering-the-arts-ireland_en.pdf

3.2.5 Arts Council

Representatives from the Arts Council (see also [section 3.1.1](#) of this report) also attended this Committee meeting to provide information on its particular role in the arts and education. It sees itself as a strong advocate for a more central place for the arts in Irish schools and is a member of the High Level Implementation Group of the Arts in Education Charter. It has also developed policies and initiatives to support the Charter's implementation and in doing so supports and promotes children and young people's engagement with the arts from birth to early adulthood. Members were informed that the Arts Council's current ten-year strategy (2016-2025) states its commitment to plan and provide for children and young people while its three-year plan (2017-2019) outlines a number of actions

and measures of particular relevance to children and young people's engagement with the arts.

Research also plays a part in the Arts Council's activities and in 2016 it commissioned research on '*Arts and Cultural Participation among Children and Young People – Insights from the Growing up in Ireland Study (Arts Council/ESRI, 2016)*'. This research has provided deeper knowledge and understanding of children's participation in the arts, and continues to inform Council policy and initiatives to the present. The Council also invests in a number of developmental initiatives to foster children and young people's engagement with the arts such as artist residencies, initial teacher education, an arts in education portal, and partnership with Music Generation (see [section 3.4.3](#) of this report).

The Arts Council has also worked closely with the Departments of Education and Skills and Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in leading the development of the *Scoileanna Ildánacha/Creative Schools* initiative, which was due to commence implementation in 150 schools in 2018. This initiative supports a diverse range of school types from a wide range of geographic regions to explore an extensive array of art forms in placing the arts and creativity at the heart of children's and young people's lives.

The Arts Council considers it essential that a joined up approach is taken as the Creative Youth plan is developed and implemented. To date, Scoileanna Ildánacha/Creative Schools has been the main area the Arts Council has led in relation to the plan. However, the Council is aware that this sits alongside a range of related actions within the Creative Youth plan, all of which are at different points of development, and some of which may perhaps over time become more closely aligned, or may be re-imagined as partnerships continue to develop.

In light of the Creative Youth plan being further developed and implemented, the Council recommended to the Committee the value in setting up a development unit, or similar resource supported by the three key departments. Local partnerships should continue to play a key role in the development and delivery of the plan, while a national unit would assist in ensuring a coherent approach, tied in with national policies of key agencies and departments.

A link to the Council's Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-02-14_opening-statement-encountering-the-arts-ireland_en.pdf

3.2.6 Discussion with Committee Members

Arts in Education Charter

The commitments in the Arts in Education Charter state that the implementation group would meet regularly and report to Ministers twice yearly. It was clarified with Members that following the retirement of the chairman of the high-level implementation group in March 2017, no replacement had been made since, nor had the Group met since then with the relevant Departments. A dedicated report on the work of the Implementation Group had yet to be published, in spite of this, various interactions had taken place with Ministers and some initiatives were realised as part of the Creative Youth plan.

Some Members expressed dissatisfaction with the delay in implementing some of the Charter's main flagship commitments and the non-implementation to date, in a meaningful way, of other commitments such as guaranteed student visits to cultural institutions, reduced ticket prices, artists' residencies, and arts policies for all second level schools. In response the Implementation Group explained to the Committee that

when the Charter was launched in 2013, the country as a whole was in a bad financial position, funding was very limited, and much of the initial period was therefore devoted to building relationships, developing more collaboration and overall planning. The Group was successful in receiving dormant account funding for some of the initiatives and this enabled it to roll out some initiatives such as those which are now part of the Creative Children programme.

Music Generation

With regard to Music Generation (see also [section 3.4.3](#) of this report), the Committee learnt from the discussion that the Department of Education and Skills intends to become involved once the existing funding, in the main philanthropic, is phased out. Music education partnerships raised 50% locally for the first three years of the initiative until it became established. This was matched by an additional 50% from the Ireland Funds after three years. The initiative is now moving into its next phase and will involve projects under Pillar 1 of Creative Ireland's Creative Youth programme which consists of local music education partnerships and is 50% funded by Creative Ireland and 50% from local music education partnerships. 11 partnerships have been developed from the first phase to be followed by nine more in phase 2 and there may be up to nine additional music education partnerships developed by 2022 as part of the national roll-out under Creative Ireland to be led in the main by the education and training boards. With regard to cost, the Department of Education and Skills believed there will be an annual budget requirement of approximately €7.5 million.

Arts Education

Arts Education was also a topic of interest during the discussions with the Committee. A proposal to include arts as part of the STEM acronym was strongly supported whereby STEM would become STEAM – Science,

Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Maths. This could facilitate a further proposal that 25 additional points be added to the State examinations for visual art or music, which are leaving certificate subjects in an effort to position arts as a serious subject rather than an activity one engages in because one is good at it.

Arts education can be further supported through the development of a national strategy for arts in post-primary education. In order to achieve this it was suggested that interested parties should be engaging with the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals who represent approximately 730 schools. Mention was also made to one of the requirements of the NCCA to include various stakeholders on all its committees. Those stakeholders would include teachers, management bodies, business and social interests, representatives from Government departments and from the State Examinations Commission, subject associations.

Members also learnt during this part of the meeting, of an ongoing review being carried out by the NCCA, following from a consultation process held in 2017 on the structure of the primary school curriculum and the time allocations within it. The consultation process yielded many points about the allocation of time, specifically for those subjects or areas of the curriculum which received less time than others. There was a real feeling that in the redevelopment of the primary school curriculum it was important to hold onto the principle of providing a broad and balanced experience for children and that areas such as the arts were essential. A key finding of their consultation process was that there had been a broad welcome for the suggestion that one should think in a more integrated way about the totality of children's experiences in primary school bearing in mind that every experience has or could have an artistic dimension throughout schoolchildren's primary school years.

The Committee also noted the impending publication of a new arts curriculum and looked forward to its public consultation. The consultation will provide the Art Teachers' Association of Ireland and others with the opportunity to comment and suggest adjustments. Members were told that an interesting feature of the work that has been done on the new leaving certificate art specification is its alignment with a new common European framework of reference for the visual arts. That has proved a useful tool in terms of aligning the arts education and experience. It was noted that the new leaving certificate course will hopefully be provided with an objective standard that is in the process of discussion and agreement across Europe.

In response to one Committee Member's query on arts education teacher training, the view was expressed that there will be many people in teacher training, particularly at primary school level, who will attend third level college without having had an experience of arts education because of the value system undermining the arts that unfortunately permeates throughout society in general and not just the education system. It was mentioned that primary school teachers can enter the classroom without having had a formative experience of the arts at secondary level. It is important as a society to understand how vital the arts are and they should not be assessed purely as part of a points system. Parents need to be assured that their children can have a fully engaged and participative role in society if and when they engage in the arts.

However, experience has shown that working in collaboration can provide support for those teachers through continuing professional development and alignments of the arts and educational organisations. The Arts in Education portal is an example of such collaboration and is about accessing information. The portal, under the Arts in Education Charter, is a go-to space where people can have conversations about what is happening. There are a number of elements to the Arts in Education Portal,

including the digital map and the research repository. Such projects and partnerships always have an artist, a teacher and students involved. People need to feel endorsed in what they believe in and the practice that they are practising. They also need to know where to go if they want to find peers and engage in continuing professional development.

Arts and Lifelong Learning

Interest was also expressed by members in the arts and lifelong learning beyond primary, post-primary and third-level. Arts and lifelong learning can be seen to fall into two categories: the first of these, 'arts participation', engages people directly in arts practice and is supported by many of the Arts Council's organisations; the second centres around the work being carried out by the Council on the continuing professional development of professional practicing artists in their work. The Council also has artists' bursaries where people can apply for money to develop their practice as artists. Therefore lifelong learning in the arts is very much about that continuum of support across all of the arts throughout all of the country in many different ways.

As mentioned in other sections of this report, Creative Ireland deals with Creative Youth, which covers those aged up to 22 or 23 years. Third-level, or further education, comes within the remit of the universities under the auspices of SOLAS (the further education and training authority for life-long learning outside of formal education), and the Arts Council. It was suggested that a greater realignment between SOLAS and what the universities are doing could be examined further. With regard to Creative Ireland's role in lifelong learning, its network of co-ordinators working at local level, brings together all the different agencies in an effort to ensure creativity is to the fore as a lifelong objective. It believes that life long learning in the arts does not suddenly cease at 18 years of age, however further encouragement and development is needed.

The view was strongly expressed that while the arts are seen as complementary, they are at the core of the function of society and are of value in and of themselves. One continues to strive, not only to resource and support the arts in education, but all of the arts. Artists must have meaningful and working lives and the infrastructure through which this is supported and facilitated is critical.

A transcript of the discussion held with the Joint Committee is available on the Committee's website at:

https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/2018-02-14/3/

3.3 Na hEalaíona agus an Ghaeilge

3.3.1 Fibín Teo

Comhlacht drámaíochta é Fibín Teo a bunaíodh in 2003 agus atá lonnaithe i gConamara. Cuireann sé saothair nua agus chlasaiceacha ar fáil i nGaeilge ar stáitse do dhaoine óga go háirithe. Tá stíl chur i láthar ag Fibín a úsáideann puipéid, maisc, scáileanna, ceol, fuaim, agus sraith de theicnící amhairc chun drámaí nuascríofa a chur ar fáil. Tá breis is 40 dráma nua curtha ar stáitse agus tugtha ar camchuart ag Fibín ó bunaíodh an comhlacht agus iad páirteach i mórfhéilte móorthimpeall na tíre. Tá camchuirteanna idirnáisiúnta curtha i gcrích freisin i dtíortha amhail an Bhreatain Bheag, Albain, an Spáinn, an Bheilg, Stáit Aontaithe Mheiriceá, Ceanada, an tSiombáib agus an tSaimbia.

Thug Fibín le fios don Choiste gur chreid sé go láidir i dtábhacht na n-ealaíon don staid daonna agus sa luach eacnamaíoch, sláinte agus oideachais a chuireann siad leis an tsochaí sa lá atá inniu ann. Dar le Fibín, luíonn sé le réasún, i gcomhthéacs an fháis as cuimse atá tagtha ar líon na nGaelscoileanna sa tír le blianta anuas, agus an lín 40% nach mór de dhaonra na tíre a dúirt go raibh Gaeilge acu sa daonáireamh is déanaí, gan

áireamh ar an gcuid eile de mhuintir na tíre atá báúil don teanga agus a bhfuil spéis acu sna healaíona i gcoitinne, go mbeadh ábhar ealaíon atá ar fáil i nGaeilge ar comhchéim leis an ábhar i mBéarla. Ach ní hamhlaidh atá agus is cluas bhodhar atá á tabhairt ag na heagrais Stáit do na healaíona Gaeilge arís is arís eile.

Tá éileamh ann i gcónaí ar an ábhar a chuireann Fíbin ar fáil ach in ainneoin seo is ar éigin atá ag éirí leis an gcompántas fanacht ar an mbóthar de bharr na mórdhúshlán atá ann do dhrámaíocht Ghaeilge na linne seo. Is é easpa maoinithe an dúshlán is mó atá ann faoi láthair in ainneoin na bhfoinsí airgid atá ar fáil d'ealaíontóirí na Gaeilge trí Fhoras na Gaeilge, trí Ealaín na Gaeltachta mar fhochoimplacht de chuid Údarás na Gaeltachta agus trí na comhairlí contae. Ach foinsí srianta atá iontu seo agus ní hiad na healaíona an príomhchúram a bhíonn orthu i gcónaí. Maidir leis an gComhairle Ealaíon, tá neamhaird á déanamh aici, áfach, ar na healaíona Gaeilge. Thug Fíbin le fios nár chaith an Chomhairle ach 0.8% den bhuiséad ar na healaíona Gaeilge. Anuas air seo, léiríonn an Chomhairle Ealaíon easpa tuisceana ar leibhéal praiticiúil nuair a dhéanann siad iarratais i nGaeilge a aistriú go Béarla mar chuid den phróiseas measúnachta!

Chun teacht thar na dúshláin thuasluaite, mhol Fíbin go láidir maoiniú mar is ceart a dhéanamh ar na healaíona Gaeilge agus ealaíontóirí, scríbhneoirí, léiritheoirí, aisteoirí agus déantúsóirí le Gaeilge a mhealladh ar ais i dtreo na n-ealaíon Gaeilge.

Tá leagan de ráiteas tosaigh Fhibín Teo ar fáil ag an nasc anseo:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-05-09_opening-statement-darach-o-tuairisg-fibin-teo_en.pdf

3.3.2 An Chomhairle Ealaíon

Is í an Chomhairle Ealaíon an ghníomhaireacht náisiúnta atá freagrach as na healaíona in Éirinn. Feidhmíonn an Chomhairle i gcomhpháirt le healaíontóirí, le heagraíochtaí ealaíon, le lucht déanta beartas poiblí agus le daoine eile chun áit lárnach a chruthú do na healaíona i saol na hÉireann. Thug an Chomhairle léargas don Choiste ar an maoiniú agus an tacaíocht atá a dtabhairt aici don earnáil ealaíon Gaeilge thar na blianta. Mar a luaigh Fibín freisin, thug an Chomhairle le fios freisin gur le cúnamh aistriúcháin ar iarratais i nGaeilge a dhéantar measúnacht orthu. Ó 1997 i leith, chuaigh an Chomhairle i mbun comhaontú le hUdarás na Gaeltachta chun Ealaín na Gaeltachta¹⁴ a bhunú mar bhealach chun na healaíona gairmiúla a fhorbairt sna ceantair Ghaeltachta.

Sa chur i láthair don Choiste dúirt an Chomhairle go ndéanann sí measúnú bliantúil ar obair Ealaín na Gaeltachta agus leantar den tacaíocht bunaithe ar an measúnú sin. Tugadh tacaíocht freisin thar na blianta d'athbhreithnithe neamhspleácha ar thionchar obair Ealaín na Gaeltachta.

Gníomhaireacht forbartha do na healaíona atá in Ealaín na Gaeltachta agus níl aon chosc ar dhaoine iarratais a chuir isteach chuig an gComhairle Ealaíon agus chuig Ealaín na Gaeltachta sa chaoi is gur féidir teacht ar mhaoiniú Gaeltachta agus náisiúnta atá ar fáil.

Tugann an Chomhairle féin tacaíocht do thionscnaimh a bhaineann le litríocht na Gaeilge trí dheontais a sholáthar do scríbhneoirí agus d'fhoilsitheoirí na Gaeilge agus d'fhéilte liteartha freisin. Ach d'fhoghlaim comhaltaí an Choiste go bhfuil dúshlán nach beag ann freisin d'earnáil liteartha na Gaeilge lena n-áirítear forbairt lucht féachana/éisteachta,

¹⁴ <http://www.ealain.ie/>

léitheoirí, aistriúchán, comhpháirtíocht, agus cur chun cinn agus scríbhneoireacht chriticiúil. Tá sé i gceist ag an gComhairle ról agus freagrachtaí comhpháirtithe ábhartha a shoiléiriú agus tacaíochtaí sainiúla a fhorbairt chun dul i ngleic le riachtanais na litríochta Gaeilge. Tugadh cur síos do chomhaltaí an Choiste freisin ar stratéis na Comhairle maidir le táirgeadh saothar ealaíne don tréimhse 2016 go 2025 agus ar ról agus tacaíocht na Comhairle i Straitéis Ealaíon Chomhtháite don Ghaeltacht agus do na hEalaíona Gaeilge mar chuid den Straitéis 20 Bliain don Ghaeilge, 2010–2030.

Tá leagan de ráiteas tosaigh na Comhairle ar fáil ag an nasc anseo:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-05-09_opening-statement-val-balance-the-arts-council-an-chomhairle-ealaion_en.pdf

3.3.3 Foras na Gaeilge

Bunaíodh Foras na Gaeilge i Mí na Nollag 1999 agus tá sé freagrach as cur chun cinn labhairt agus scríobh na Gaeilge sa saol poiblí agus sa saol príobháideach i bPoblacht na hÉireann.

San aitheasc a thug an Foras don Choiste, nochtadh go láidir an tuairim go mbeadh sé deacair do phobail na Gaeilge maireachtáil mar phobail gan gníomhaíocht bhríomhar sna hEalaíona trí Ghaeilge. Caithfidh réimse iomlán na n-ealaíon trí Ghaeilge a bheith ar fáil ag pobail na Gaeilge ina bpobail féin, agus caithfidh ealaíona trí Ghaeilge a bheith á bhforbairt sna pobail nua Ghaeilge atá ag teacht chun cinn sa tír. Is dlúthchuid iad na healaíona den phróiseas pleanála teanga sna ceantair sin.

Imríonn na healaíona ról riachtanach sa tsochaí trí chuidiú leis an bpobal iad féin a chur in iúl, agus a bhféiniúlacht a léiriú agus a shainiú. Tá

tábhacht ar leith leis na healaíona trí Ghaeilge mar dheis ag pobal na Gaeilge sna ceantair sin a bhfuil an Ghaeilge á forbairt agus á caomhnú iontu mar theanga phobail, sóisialú trí Ghaeilge ar ócáidí ealaíon, agus le deis a thabhairt dóibh gréasáin shóisialta a fhorbairt trí na healaíona. Anuas air sin, tá tábhacht leis na healaíona trí Ghaeilge mar uirlis le go mbeidh daoine sna pobail sin in ann iad féin a chur in iúl dá bpobail agus don saol mór.

Dar leis an bhForas, tá ról suntasach maidir leis an tacaíocht a thugann sé chun é seo a bhaint amach agus freisin chun na healaíona Gaeilge a chur chun cinn taobh amuigh de na ceantair Ghaeltachta agus de na ceantair ina bhfuil an Ghaeilge mar theanga phobail. Déantar seo trí thionscadail tacaíochta a ghabháil de láimh, agus cúnamh deontais a thabhairt do chomhlachtaí agus do ghrúpaí de réir mar a mheasfar is gá. Tá réimse leathan scéimeanna maoinithe féilte, complachtaí drámaíochta, foilsitheoirí agus scríbhneoirí san áireamh anseo freisin.

Tá leagan de ráiteas tosaigh an Fhorais ar fáil ag an nasc anseo:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-05-09_opening-statement-sean-o-coinn-foras-na-gaeilge_en.pdf

3.3.4 Údarás na Gaeltachta

Is é Údarás na Gaeltachta an ghníomhaireacht forbartha réigiúnach atá maoinithe ag an Rialtas chun forbairt theangeolaíoch, chultúrtha, shóisialta, fhisiciúil agus gheilleagrach na Gaeltachta a chur chun cinn. Is é caomhnú agus láidriú na Gaeilge mar theanga bheo agus mar phríomhtheanga phobail na Gaeltachta, le cois í a thabhairt mar oidhreacht don chéad ghlúin eile, an bunchuspóir atá le beartais Údarás na Gaeltachta.

Thug an t-Údarás le fios don Choiste go bhfuil ról thar a bheith tábhachtach ag na healaíona aithrise/dúchasacha mar shampla i seachadadh teanga agus tionchar ag cleachtas na n-ealaíon sin ar chumas,

ar chleachtas agus ar úsáid teanga. Tá sé tábhachtach pobail a mhealladh chuig na healaíona ionas go dtabharfaí deis dóibh máistreacht a fháil ar an teanga. Anuas air seo tá deis ann trí ealaíontóirí eile ar nós fíis-ealaíontóirí agus rincoirí, atá ag gníomhú trí mheán na Gaeilge, tacú le seachadadh teanga. Is doras isteach ar an teanga don ghnáthdhuine iad na healaíona a chuireann an Ghaeilge chun cinn ar bhealach samhlaíoch, neamhbhagarthach.

Dúradh leis an gCoiste go raibh comhpháirtíocht ann idir an tÚdarás agus an Chomhairle Ealaíon ó 1997 le bunú na fochuideachta Ealaín na Gaeltachta Teo. Tá Ealaín na Gaeltachta maoinithe ag an dá eagraíocht. Is é príomh-aidhm Ealaín na Gaeltachta ná na healaíona a fhorbairt ag leibhéal réigiúnach ar fud na Gaeltachta. Tá infheistíocht shuntasach déanta ag an dá eagraíocht i réimse na n-ealaíon ó shin i leith, agus téann an comhoibriú agus an phleanáil straitéiseach atá idir an dá eagraíocht i gcion go dearfach ar cháilíocht agus ar dheiseanna forbartha i gcúrsaí ealaíon sa Ghaeltacht.

Baineann Ealaín na Gaeltachta é seo amach trí chlár thacaíochta agus scéimeanna a chuir ar fáil chun infreastruchtúir na n-ealaíon a thógáil ar bhunús fadtéarmach. Maoinítear féilte, sparánachtaí d'ealaíontóirí, agus tá scéim ar leith ann dírithe ar thacaíocht a sholáthar d'ealaíontóirí aonair nó grúpaí ar suim leo miontionscadal nó togra tosaíochta ealaíon a fhorbairt. Déantar freisin tograí straitéiseacha ealaíona faoi leith a fhorbairt agus a fheidhmiú i gcomhpháirtíocht le heagrais agus le gníomhaireachtaí réigiúnacha, náisiúnta agus idirnáisiúnta, ag brath ar scéimeanna maoinithe atá ar fáil. Baineann na tograí seo le comhpháirtíochtaí le dreamanna eile atá mór-bhainteach leis na healaíona Gaeilge ar fud na tíre.

Dar leis an Údarás, is mór an tionchar atá ag an obair thuasluaite ar na healaíona Gaeilge thar na blianta. Molann sé gur féidir cur leis seo trí bhreis tograí comhpháirtíochta agus deiseanna comhoibrithe a chruthú agus a fhorbairt chun na healaíona Gaeilge agus Gaeltachta a fhorbairt

agus a chur chun cinn ar bhonn náisiúnta agus idirnáisiúnta agus chun a chinntiú go bhfuil soláthar maoinithe reatha ar fáil do thograí straitéiseacha ealaíon ar fud na Gaeltachta.

Tá ráiteas tosaigh an Údaráis ar fáil anseo:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-02-28_opening-statement-udaras-na-gaeltachta_en.pdf

3.3.5 Plé le Comhaltaí an Choiste

Maoiniú

Nochtadh go láidir an tuairim gur ceart go mbeadh tús áite ag an nGaeilge sna healaíona ach gur mór an díomá é sa lá atá inniu ann nach bhfuil an Ghaeilge ach in áit na leathphingine fad agus a bhaineann leis na healaíona. Tá maoiniú Fhoras na Gaeilge agus Údarás na Gaeltachta laghdaithe go mór le blianta anuas agus i gcoitinne níl á chaitheamh ar an nGaeilge i mbliana ach an méid céanna a bhí á chaitheamh in 2008.

Cúis mhór díomá do chomhaltaí an Choiste ná a laghad airgid a chaitheann an Chomhairle Ealaíon ar an teanga. Mhínigh an Chomhairle don Choiste áfach nach bpléann an Chomhairle leis an nGaeilge go díreach agus nach spéis leo ach maoiniú a thabhairt do na tograí ealaíona is fearr, bídis i nGaeilge nó i mBéarla. Mar sin, is ar an gcaighdeán ealaíne atá sé dírithe. Mar sin féin, meabhraíodh don Choiste nár chóir neamhaird a dhéanamh den difir idir comhlacht atá bunaithe i mBaile Átha Cliath ag dul ar camchuairt taobh istigh de limistéir an M50 agus compántas Gaeltachta le lucht féachana srianta atá ag iarraidh léiriúcháin a thabhairt síos faoi chósta iomlán iarthar na tíre agus na mórchostais lena mbaineann.

É sin ráite, tá laghdú nach beag de 35% ar bhuiséad na Comhairle Ealaíon le blianta beaga anuas. Deich mbliana ó shin bhí buiséad caipitil ann do

chruthú fostaíochta a thit ó €28 milliún go €5 mhilliún agus atá anois ag €7 milliún. Deich mbliaina ó shin, bhí ciste ann d'fhorbairt phobail, chultúir agus teanga de €5 mhilliún agus tá sé sin ag €3 mhilliún in 2018. Thit an fhostaíocht san Údarás le deich mbliana ó 130 go dtí 79. Táthar ag iarraidh dul ar ais go buiséad de €6 mhilliún le haghaidh forbairt phobail, teanga agus chultúir agus sa ghearrthéarma go dtí €12 mhilliún ó thaobh caipiteal chun fostaíocht a chruthú. Cothaíonn seo dúshlán mór don Údarás fáil ar ais go dtí an áit a raibh sé, agus go dtí an áit a gcaithfidh sé a bheith, chun a chuid aidhmeanna agus cuspóirí a bhaint amach.

Is amhlaidh freisin d'Fhoras na Gaeilge: má théitear siar go dtí 2002, tá comparáid 1:2 idir maoiniú d'Fhoras na Gaeilge agus don Chomhairle Ealaíon, is é sin €19 milliún versus €34 mhilliún. Sa lá atá inniu ann, is thart faoi €17 milliún versus €68 milliún an cóimheas.

Dar leis an gComhairle Ealaíon caithfidh na heagrais agus na healaíontóirí a bheith i gcoimhlint lena chéile agus maoiniú do thograí i gcoitinne a bhíonn thíos leis seo dá bharr, pé teanga ina mbíonn siad. In ainneoin seo, agus fad is a bhaineann leis na healaíona Gaeilge, is féidir leis an gComhairle dul i mbun comhpháirtíocht le hÚdarás na Gaeltachta.

Cé go raibh titim shuntasach ann ó thaobh cúrsaí maoinithe faoi na ceannteidil éagsúla, dúirt an tÚdarás go raibh an-obair á déanamh faoi láthair chun teacht ar na méid céanna airgid is a bhí ann roimh na laghduithe móra. Maidir le hEalaíon na Gaeltachta, bhí maoiniú de €1m deich mbliaina ó shin a thit go leath an mhéid sin san idirthréimhse agus tá sé tagtha ar ais arís go dtí €780,000 inniu. Tá sé tábhachtach mar sin go mbeifear de shíor ag lorg foinsí airgeadais eile do na healaíona Gaeilge.

Moladh mar sin go gcuirfí maoiniú ar leith ar fáil ann chun eagraíocht a bhunú nach mbeadh mar dhualgas aici ach foinsí airgeadais a reáchtáil do na healaíona Gaeilge ar fud na tíre.

Comhoibriú

Tá na heagraíochtaí go léir nach mór faoi scáth Éire Ildánach a fheidhmíonn trí chomhoibriú a chothú idir na daoine agus na heagrais go léir atá ag plé leis an teanga agus na healaíona sa teanga. Is é an buntáiste is mó a bhaineann leis an gcomhoibriú sin ná gur féidir seirbhís i bhfad níos fearr a chur ar fáil do na heagrais Ghaeilge agus do na healaíontóirí féin. Ach níl aon amhrais ann ach go bhfuil géarghá ann anois an comhoibriú idir na heagraíochta ealaíona Gaeilge a threisiú. B'fhiú díriú ar na healaíona nach bhfuil chomh forbartha sin le healaíona eile ar fud na tíre. B'shin an fhealsúnacht nó straitéis a bhí taobh thiar den chomhpháirtíocht le hÚdarás na Gaeltachta agus le hEalaín na Gaeltachta, ach ar an drochuair, bhí easpa iarratasóirí ó na Gaeltachtaí ann. Tá riachtanas ann i gcónaí, mar sin, na healaíona sna Gaeltachtaí a fhorbairt sa chaoi is go mbeidh sé ar a gcumas cur isteach ar mhaoiniú (atá ar fáil) agus a bheith in iomaíocht le dreamanna eile, Gaeilge nó Béarla. Moladh praiticiúil a tugadh ag an gcruinniú ná go ndéanfaidh an Chomhairle aon iarratas a tháinig isteach i nGaeilge a bhreith sa teanga sin in áit iad a aistriú go Béarla don phainéal measúnúcháin. B'fhéidir go mbeadh bealach ann freisin do roinnt de na heagraíochta ealaíon Gaeilge teacht le chéile agus comhiarratas a ullmhú ar mhaoiniú as a mbainfeadh tograí i nGaeilge an tairbhe is mó.

Bhí an Coiste i bhfábhar chomhpháirtíocht agus straitéis a chothú do na healaíona trí Ghaeilge mar oidhreacht ar Bhliain na Gaeilge. Oidhreacht iontach a bheadh anseo do Bhliain na Gaeilge dá n-éireadh leis an gComhairle Ealaíon, le tacaíocht ón Roinn, straitéis a chur i dtoll a chéile do na healaíona Gaeilge leis na comhpháirtithe eile.

Rinneadh tagairt sa phlé do na healaíona dúchasacha agus dúradh nach dtugtar dóthain airde orthu, nó nach gcuirtear dóthain béime ar an bhfíorthábhacht atá ann maidir leis na healaíona dúchasacha - Béarla nó Gaeilge. Mar shampla mairfidh ceoldrámaíocht mura mbeadh sé in Éirinn, ach tá go leor ealaíona áirithe dúchasacha nach mairfidh mura mairfidh siad ar an oileán seo, mar go mbaineann siad leis an tír seo amháin. Cé

acu ab fhearr: go dtabharfaí maoiniú na n-ealaíon iomlán Gaeilge d'aon eagraíocht Rialtais amháin nó go gcuirfí go mór leis an gcomh-mhaoiniú a bheadh ar fáil d'Ealaín na Gaeltachta ar an gcoinníoll go mbeadh euro in aghaidh euro ar fáil ón gComhairle Ealaíon? Nochtadh an tuairim go gcaithfear fás a dhéanamh ar na foinsí airgeadais atá ann faoi láthair, ach ag an am céanna go gcaithfear a thabhairt san áireamh dá mhéad a chuirimid isteach sna healaíona nó sa chultúr, is ea is mó atáthar ag brath ar an bpobal, an pobal áitiúil go háirithe.

Tá nasc chuig tras-scríbhinn ar an bplé leis an gCoiste ar fáil anseo:

https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/2018-02-28/3/

3.4 Issues Relating to Music in Ireland Today

3.4.1 DIT Conservatory of Music and Drama

The Conservatory of Music and Drama ("the Conservatory") is the Dublin Institute of Technology's centre for education in the performing arts. It presented itself to the Committee as a centre of excellence for education in the performing arts offering performance-based study programmes in music from age three through to doctoral study, an undergraduate programme in drama performance, and courses for adults.

The Conservatory strongly believes that an education in music is the one aspect of education – allied to literacy – that can add value to the whole of our lives. As with other groups who contributed to the Committee's debate on the topic, the Conservatory stressed that everybody is entitled to an education in music. In Ireland however, most children are not literate in music at the end of primary school level. As a result there is no momentum throughout secondary level education, and on reaching third level it is the general experience that a large number of incoming students

of music only possess only a remedial standard of fundamental music education. If this trend is to be halted and reversed, primary school children must be exposed to the diversity of musical traditions and finish primary school with a basic standard in music literacy. This can be achieved through intervention by either supporting primary teachers in bringing about this goal or by employing specialist music teachers with pedagogy training. In the absence of such intervention parents are paying for private music lessons and in some cases travelling long distances every week to ensure their children receive a quality music education. Children without access to such tuition due to geographical and/or socioeconomic reasons miss out and the opportunity to support gifted children who could have a future as professional musicians is missed. As a result of this DIT Conservatory referred to European reports showing Ireland ranking very low against other states with regard to music education and orchestral provision.

A copy of the Conservatory's Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-05-23_opening-statement-dr-orla-mcdonagh-head-conservatory-of-music-and-drama-dublin-institute-of-technology-dit_en.pdf

3.4.2 Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann

Founded in Mullingar in 1951, Comhaltas consists today of 420 branches in 15 countries worldwide. As a non-profit cultural movement its main objective is to preserve and promote Irish traditional music through classes, adjudicator training, summer schools, music sessions, competitions and concert tours. In addition to being a publisher of Irish music content, it also has an archive of thousands of hours of music recordings, a large print library and a growing collection of audiovisual content.

Through its wide network of branches, Comhaltas provides 1,200 informal classes to people of all ages outside of a school setting on a community basis. Comhaltas also runs the Teastas i dTeagasc Ceolta Tíre (TTCT) through which teachers qualify. Members were informed that there are more than 800 qualified traditional music teachers with the TTCT diploma. The course is run every year and is in great demand among teachers who want to teach in their communities through local Comhaltas branches and outside the branches, for example, in schools, marching bands, céilí bands and grúpaí ceoil. Teachers are also supported by the Trad is Fab educational resource which has been distributed to every primary school in the country in the past few years'. The pack contains teacher notes, classroom notes, a DVD, student worksheets and background information and is being used bilingually in a great number of schools around the country.

In the 68 years since its foundation, Comhaltas informed the Committee that it had seen a transformation in the standing of Irish traditional music from weak participation and awareness to a significant increase in the creativity and proficiency of individual artists and the exponential growth in the number of people participating as artists and as audience members. Comhaltas also organises the annual Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann event which had 450,000 visitors in 2017 enjoying ten days of competitions and performances. The event, which generates €40m each year for the region in which it is held, crossed the border in 2013 for the first time and attracted 430,000 visitors.

The Committee was told of Comhaltas' strong belief in cross-border interaction and wider international cooperation. It is a partner with European Sounds, the music archive, which has 20 partners in Europe. In addition it also organises a programme called 'Trad for Trócaire' to raise funds for people in the Third World. Comhaltas is also very active in the fields of youth and its youth section is leading everything it does. In

Comhaltas' view young people have taken ownership of traditional music and are expanding and enhancing it in many ways. The Irish language is also central to its work and Comhaltas takes a bilingual approach in making the language more accessible amongst its wide and international membership.

The Committee was told that the practice and appreciation of Irish traditional instrumental and vocal music today is evident both nationally and internationally and in its view an oral art form intergenerational transmission, in the appropriate community setting, is at the core of its vibrancy today, and its preservation into the future. The success of Comhaltas' attraction to such wide audiences and participants at its events is due in the main to volunteerism. The organisation uses 40,000 volunteers in providing its services to 3 million people every year.

A copy of Comhaltas' Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-05-23_opening-statement-labhras-o-murchu-ardstiurthoir-comhaltas-ceolteoiri-eireann_en.pdf

3.4.3 Music Generation

Music Generation was established in 2010 and is Ireland's National Music Education programme. It is co-funded by U2, The Ireland Funds, the Department of Education and Skills, and Local Music Education Partnerships. It operates through a devolved model of delivery by Music Education Partnerships, in response to local need and context and within an overall national framework. The programme has been rolled out in two music education partnership areas to date and the Government has committed to supporting the nation-wide roll-out of the programme by 2022.

Music Generation considers the right of every Irish child and young person to have access to music tuition as an essential part of their cultural entitlement as the main issue with regard to music in Ireland today. This is being brought about through its pioneering model of philanthropic-public partnership, resulting in long-term sustainability through a measured, strategic approach to growth and an underlying commitment to quality and success. Music Generation believes strongly in the musical potential, and rights of every child and young person, to have the choice of access and the chance to participate as a musical citizen. Committee members learnt that, since the foundation of Music Generation, 46,500 opportunities have been created for children and young people to avail of music tuition. Also 350 job opportunities have been created for musicians in providing over 58,000 hours of tuition and music programmes spread out across 800 centres.

The initiative is now in its second phase and benefiting from additional philanthropic funding to extend to new areas throughout Ireland. Donations from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation and Bank of America, and a commitment from the Irish Government to provide co-funding, will hopefully contribute to the long-term sustainability of the initiative and further build on its success to date. Music generation intends that by the year 2022 this ground-breaking public-philanthropic partnership will have brought about something that Ireland has been trying to achieve for more than 80 years: a national, State-supported infrastructure for the local delivery of performance music education for children and young people. In achieving its ambitions for children, young people and the musicians with whom it works, Music Generation has set out in its Strategic Plan three overarching Priorities for 2016 to 2021: Growth, Sustainability and Quality¹⁵.

¹⁵ Music Generation, (2016). [Music Generation Strategic Plan 2016 – 2021](#). Dublin: Music Generation.

A copy of Music Generation's Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-05-23_opening-statement-leo-blennerhassett-chairman-music-generation-development-of-music_en.pdf

3.4.4 Sing Out With Strings – Irish Chamber Orchestra

Sing Out with Strings is the Irish Chamber Orchestra's flagship community outreach programme whose main aim is to continue to expand, contribute and strengthen the social, cultural and creative hub of communities within Limerick's regeneration process. The Irish Chamber Orchestra is a professional orchestra resident at the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance at the University of Limerick and is primarily funded by the Arts Council of Ireland/An Chomhairle Ealaíon.

Representatives from the Orchestra explained to Committee members that its Sing Out With Strings programme started ten years ago and since then has been engaging children in positive community activities, through performing and experiencing music from an early age, thus facilitating change that feeds into the wider community. It uses music as a tool to enable children's personal, social, academic and artistic development, and aims to instigate measurable social change.

Since its establishment in 2008 as a community engagement programme, with the participation of 60 children from Galvone National School, it has now expanded and is providing 110 core teaching hours benefiting over 300 children through providing free weekly workshops in singing, song-writing, violin, viola, cello and double bass tuition in two schools, Le Chéile N.S. and St. Mary's National School.

Representatives from Music Generation described the initiative's success in developing unique, valued and demonstrable transferable skills at a formative age. Its programmes are independently evaluated and these evaluations have concluded that the programme has been able to profoundly change the lives of hundreds of children through music education and by that same action, affect the overall well-being of school staff.

Community involvement is vital to the scheme and the Irish Chamber Orchestra has immersed itself in the project by bringing the orchestra to the community and gradually introducing people to the university where it is based and to its concert hall. Children taking part have developed musically and have moved on to studying for the Royal Irish Academy exams thus offering them a huge sense of achievement when they receive their qualifications.

Members were informed that the cost of providing the above with successful results is €200k per annum. However such an amount is difficult to raise and leads to strong sustainability challenges. The investment is well worth it and an evaluation of the scheme in 2016 concluded that children benefited from the scheme's classes with outcomes such as individual cognitive and physical progress - such as motor skills or musical literacy - behavioural development, discipline, experiencing respect and tolerance, pride and self-confidence, patience, team work, learning the value of active public and civic engagement and a sense of calm.

A copy of Sing Out with Strings' Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-05-23_opening-statement-gerard-keen-an-chief-executive-singout-with-strings-irish-chamber-orchestra-development-of-music_en.pdf

3.4.5 Discussion with Committee members

Government Policy

The question was raised during the discussion on music tuition policy at Government level and children's music literacy in general. Music Generation explained that in its view there has been a fundamental gap in music education in Ireland for decades due in the main to the absence of a music policy aimed at education in particular. It was clear to those taking part in the discussion that their respective organisations operated mainly outside of the formal education structure but the lack of coherent policy has had an effect on children and young people's participation as musical citizens. The importance of musical and cultural citizenship therefore must be recognised when it comes to adding value to how children and young people experience music and other art forms within mainstream education.

As part of national policy, the Creative Youth Programme¹⁶, under the auspices of the Creative Ireland Programme, was launched at the end of 2017 with the aim of placing children, young people and creativity at the heart of society. It has identified actions aimed at creating better access to creativity for children and young people. Another approach to the challenge of a national policy can be found at the intersection of the two relevant departments with responsibility for this area, the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Co-departmental initiatives need to continue to be rolled out in guaranteeing that every Irish child will be musically literate and/or have access to such without having to depend solely on proximity to music classes or affordability of musical instruments. Many primary schools receive Government grants for sports equipment, for instance, but they do

¹⁶ https://creativeireland.ie/sites/default/files/media/file-uploads/2018-03/CI_ChildrensPlan_Screen_1.pdf

not necessarily receive Government grants for musical instruments to the same level.

Access and Participation

Access and participation has been improving over the years and today Music Generation has secured funding from philanthropic donors, Government and local partnerships. Recent statistics show that the current level of funding has increased participation to 13.8% in the 12 areas of Ireland where the programme is established, showing clearly that investment does work.

Another approach discussed at the meeting was that of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann who set up its own education structure consisting today of 1,200 classes each week across the country, 10% of which take place at its cultural institute in south Dublin, An Chultúrlann. Organic growth is taking place where today there is huge participation in Comhaltas' flagship musical festival, the Fleadh Cheoil, in which 25,000 young people compete every year.

In terms of Government investment, all praised the work of the Irish Chamber Orchestra but acknowledged its limitations compared to a symphony orchestra. Government support for orchestras in Ireland pales into insignificance compared to other EU member states, such as Finland for example, which has 29 symphony orchestras and invests €70 million in music projects.

Music Literacy

The Committee heard how neuroscience research in the past 30 years is beginning to show that music training from a very early age gives a person much more advantage in terms of how they learn other subjects. The question is no longer about why we are capitulating to the economy;

the question should be whether we can afford not to give our economy the boost of having an educated population growing up with these extra skills, providing a significant boost for an economy, regardless of any of the other benefits of having a music education.

There is a problem with primary school students leaving without a sense of literacy in music leading to problems at secondary level in continuing with a music education. Music literacy to which children need exposure include the diversity of music traditions, training the ear properly, and learning how to sing and improvise, learning how to read music (for classical music in particular) and learning how to play an instrument. The dilemma for most primary school teachers is that they are, by their nature, generalist educators and there is perhaps a need to look at engaging specialist music teachers within the primary school curriculum.

Legislation is important and needs to be driven by relevant Government departments in supporting creativity in education and ensuring all music traditions are present throughout the school curriculum at both primary and post-primary level so that every child has access to music education. If music is not a core part in the timetable it will be marginalised and young children deprived of exposure to Ireland's music and the opportunity to embrace and practise it. In this way they will gain self development and a confidence focus and a vision in life.

In summary the view was expressed, in no uncertain terms, that we have lost our way entirely in terms of culture, music and art in the classroom. Decades ago when the economy was very badly off compared to today, there were more theatres in Dublin, Limerick and Cork than there are today and little talk of cutting and or removing orchestra budgets. Emphasis in music in education has shifted to the more academic within the leaving certificate now where music is seen more as a instrument to help gain points. Funding is necessary to promote arts education more and

music literacy from both an academic and performing perspective from a young age. In bringing this about, society needs to be careful that it does not have a narrow definition of literacy i.e. the classical musician should know about traditional music and vice-versa and indeed tradition outside of Ireland, where lessons can be learned and where performance music education, has added value and enriched mainstream formal education without having to replace that curriculum.

A transcript of the discussion held with the Joint Committee is available on the Committee's website at:

https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/2018-05-23/3/

3.5 The Arts in Society

3.5.1 Sherkin Island Development Society

The Sherkin Island Development Society presented members with information on its BAVA programme, a community based Bachelor in Arts programme provided on the island. The programme is a strong initiative with a key role in addressing population decline on the island. According to the Society, there are now five permanent residents on the island as a result of this programme which receives funding of €60,000 to deliver the course. In the Society's view, however, the return value on this investment is €415,000.

The four-year degree programme, attended on-site by students, is accredited by Dublin Institute of Technology and is run in partnership between Sherkin Island Development Society, the West Cork Arts Centre and Dublin Institute of Technology. Students attend classes on-site for four years every alternate weekend. Classes are held in a modest local community hall, which proves that high-end quality education can be delivered anywhere. It relies on local supports and remote learning to

deliver the course and the Sherkin Island Development Society is responsible for the accommodation and facility and the direct employment of an arts facilitator, IT facilitator and an administrator.

In spite of the programme's success there is no guarantee of its long-term sustainability. Funding is decided on a year-to-year basis thus rendering it difficult to plan for the programme's future funding and development. Such long-term sustainability would ensure the settlement of vibrant communities on the island, and drive development on the West Cork Islands through the Integrated Development Strategy, in addition to creating opportunities for the people of West Cork to have access to, and engage with, local and global arts practice of excellence.

A copy of the Society's Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-06-20_opening-statement-aisling-moran-project-co-ordinator-sherkin-island-development-society_en.pdf

3.5.2 National College of Art and Design – Community Outreach

The National College of Art and Design (NCAD) provides art and design degrees and currently has 1,200 full-time and 600 part time evening students. It offers the largest number of art and design degrees in the State at undergraduate and postgraduate level at its location in the heart of the Dublin liberties.

In addressing the Committee, NCAD described its graduates as innovators, co-creators and self-starters. The college has a long history of connecting graduates and programmes with partners in education, the cultural sector and civil society. NCAD contributes to enabling wider participation in the arts as is evident in the work of its students in following their paths out of

college across a range of fields. NCAD also has a school of education which trains new arts teachers. Students are encouraged, through their education, to think about the role of their practice as they leave college and the ways they can connect their work to either a specific audience or a specific context.

The college has a long and very embedded commitment to accessing art college and has built relationships and established partnerships within the local community, with 35 DEIS primary schools and 42 DEIS secondary schools. It also has a range of outreach programmes in the greater Dublin area and County Dublin with a focus on bringing students into the campus. Portfolio scholarship programmes are provided over the summer and during the year for students from disadvantaged areas.

In NCAD's view, entrance to art college can represent a double disadvantage for students with little cultural capital and little knowledge of the field. This alone is a huge challenge with somewhat vague career prospects for those involved in the art and design industry, particularly if they choose to do fine art, which is considered by the industry to be a precarious profession. Through the The Programme for Access to Higher Education (PATH), NCAD is working alongside Trinity College Dublin, UCD, Marino Institute of Education and Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology, in a three-pronged approach to widening participation to those from disadvantaged backgrounds across the five colleges. With regard to the local community, NCAD is engaged with partners such as the IMMA, and national galleries and museums, as well as Rialto youth project, Digital Hub, SOLAS and Tallaght Community Arts. NCAD runs an entrepreneurship summer camp with Axis Ballymun and the Rediscovery Centre in Ballymun.

Members were told of a new initiative, 'studio plus', introducing a voluntary year for students between second and third year whereby they will be encouraged to take their work out of the campus and work in different places in the surrounding community.

A copy of the College's Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-06-20_opening-statement-professor-sarah-glennie-director-ncad_en.pdf

3.5.3 Age and Opportunity Ireland

Age and Opportunity Ireland facilitates opportunities for those over 50 in engaging in activities in arts and culture, sport and other physical activity, and being generally involved as active citizens. In light of the fact that people today are living longer than their predecessors, Age and Opportunity Ireland's ageing programmes are developed to encourage people to live their lives to their full potential. It achieves its aim in partnership with other bodies such as the HSE, Sport Ireland and the Arts Council.

In its presentation to the Committee, Age and Opportunity Ireland presented some facts related to ageing in Ireland: the percentage of the population in Ireland of over 65 is currently at 12%, and is estimated to increase to 22% by 2041. People are living longer and healthier lives and are living in more diverse contexts. Participation in the arts is seen to contribute to social benefits, self-confidence, morale, greater social connectivity, and physical and cognitive health.

Members were provided with information on one of Age Action Ireland's flagship projects, *Bealtaine Festival*, a national festival uniquely

celebrating the arts and creativity in society's ageing population. The festival is Ireland's largest cooperative festival and the world's first national celebration of creativity in older age. Since its establishment in 1985, it has inspired and empowered older people to live healthy and fulfilling lives. It has also been an influencing factor on policy to ensure the active participation of older people in ways that benefit local communities and wider society. In doing so, it supports artists as they age and addresses the under-representation of older people in public life.

Age and Opportunity Ireland strongly believes that creativity is a lifelong journey, and the life course of people engaging in the arts and creativity is key. The Committee was informed that research carried out in the UK in 2017, which included a survey of 100,000 people, showed the number one factor contributing to older people's wellbeing was access to creativity, ahead of financial security and health. Other research has shown that there are cognitive benefits from a focused and deep engagement in arts activities which are crucial for older people and must be taken into account by government when planning for Ireland's vibrant, dynamic and increasing ageing population. The arts have a very particular role to play in older life in relation to identity, meaning, activity and health. Because of those social and personal benefits, Age and Opportunity Ireland believes it is addressing an equity issue. Age Opportunity Ireland meets the strong needs of older people and their creativity by supporting and being an active player in Government policy in this area.

A copy of Age and Opportunity Ireland's Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-06-20_opening-statement-tara-byrne-age-and-opportunity_en.pdf

3.5.4 Arts and Disability Ireland

Arts and Disability Ireland is the national development and resource organisation for arts and disability in Ireland, championing the creativity of artists with disabilities and promoting inclusive experiences for audiences with disabilities. Its main funding comes from the Arts Council enabling it to work nationally through a series of multi-annual partnerships across the arts and cultural environment. A new funding scheme for artists with disabilities in Ireland set up in 2014 has supported 47 new work, mentoring and training awards. Aimed exclusively at artists with disabilities, it serves as an entry point to the broad range of bursaries, project/production awards, commissions and collaborations through the Arts Council and local authority arts offices.

In 2006, Arts and Disability Ireland initiated the very first of its access services for audiences with disabilities with audio described performances at the Abbey Theatre and Dublin Theatre Festival. Over the years a small number of venues and festivals have started providing Irish Sign Language and more recently relaxed performances, but Arts and Disability Ireland is currently the sole provider of audio description and captioning to the arts in Ireland. This peaked in 2014 with 23 and 30 performances respectively, but declined to 9 and 7 in 2017. However this contrasts starkly with Scotland, where there were 248 audio described and 68 captioned performances in 2017.

In the largest quantitative audience survey of its type ever undertaken in Ireland, the 'Going Out Survey', carried out in 2017, 94% of people with disabilities said that they had cut back on at least one of their social activities in the last five years. Research shows that people with disabilities are arts attenders and almost two-thirds want to attend more frequently. It is the view of Arts and Disability Ireland that if it were made possible for just half of them to come one more time, bringing a friend or

family member with them, then the arts and cultural sector stands to earn an additional €7m!

A copy of Arts and Disability Ireland's Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-06-20_opening-statement-padraig-naughton-executive-director-arts-and-disability_en.pdf

3.5.5 MacAuley Place (Naas)

McAuley Place, in Naas, Co Kildare, has as its main aim the bringing together of older people to the heart of vibrant communities through the development of what it described to the Committee as 'an intergenerational, stimulating and creative environment that uses the arts as a tool for engagement to enhance wellbeing and encourage life-long learning'. The Centre presented Committee members with information on its 53 self-contained apartment complex and its arts and culture centre - used by the entire community for music, dance, film and other activities. A community centre, a volunteer hub, and tea rooms make up the remainder of the complex. The centre is an initiative comprising an integrated housing and community space in which residents are empowered to sustain independent and healthy living in their own community into old age while maintaining their strong links with the community they have built their lives in.

In the Centre's view, society puts value on the creativity and ideas of the youth and once a person turns a certain age society decides that they don't matter, that they have had their time and they should just relax, sit down and let the youth take over. Older people stop developing new skills and learning as they feel unwelcome and as a result remain in their houses and eventually go to nursing homes. Both the older people

themselves and society as a whole suffers as both become impoverished by the lack of interaction between the two. The arts projects developed by the McAuley Centre aims to address this trend by bringing all people together no matter what their age, sex or background is, and create a space where art for all is at its core.

The Centre, located in a renovated convent, is currently in its final stage in its creation of a 'Health through Learning Centre' consisting of three creative rooms, accommodation for an artist-in-residence, a community arts therapy space and new space for ancillary measures. This final phase of the Centre's development will ensure the overall project's new approach to addressing the needs of the elderly in the context of a broader model of community development. Its intention is to serve as a model to show other communities how learning and sharing skills and crafts can be a tool for maintaining health, wellbeing and promoting intergenerational solidarity.

A copy of McCauley Place's Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-06-20_opening-statement-brian-rowntree-chairperson-mcauley-place_en.pdf

3.5.6 Discussion with Committee Members

Community Engagement

There was no doubt from the opening statements and the ensuing discussion between witnesses and Committee members that access to creativity is access to great health and that great health is access to great creativity. The discussion referred also to the Mercer Institute, a co-venture between St. James's Hospital and Trinity College Dublin, which runs the Creative Life programme, a treatment programme where

engagement with creativity is strongly encouraged. The programme is informed by the Irish longitudinal study on ageing (TILDA), which consisted of an in-depth assessment over a long period of what was needed to support successful ageing. It identified in no uncertain terms that engagement with creativity was one of the things that could support successful ageing. Students of NCAD by taking part in the programme acquire greater learning and experience by their active involvement in the programme through working with patients and organising events in hospitals.

The McAuley Centre is another example of bringing arts education into a community resulting in bringing new life into an area of a town that had not been working very well. In this way the whole community could be engaged in a project for older people by keeping people out of nursing homes and promoting the arts as a tool for well-being. However with regard to funding applications, the Committee learnt that evaluation was based on 'bricks and mortar' only and consideration should be given to moving into existing buildings in the middle of town communities. Also, in relation to funding, the question of 'measurement' was raised: the view was expressed that, as part of a neoliberal world, measurement has become quantitative rather than qualitative and today's society appears to choose to understand the need to judge things in terms of figures only. While this can continue to be one way of measuring things, it is a very poor tool in measuring the arts and life in general. The impact of the arts and culture in particular is long-term; there was therefore a need to look towards long-term measurement in equal qualitative terms.

Sherkin island was seen as an example of another kind of community access where a Dublin-based college runs a successful outreach programme many miles away in a small remote island community. It is a very practical example of an initiative that works because it is positively exploited within the local community where it is tagged on to tourism and

the economy. It is a model that can be implemented in other areas. However the point was made during the discussion that such practical initiatives do not work most efficiently when funded on a year-to-year basis only. Discussion must take place, and recommendations implemented, which guarantee sustainable ongoing funding for such worthy initiatives which bring arts education straight into the local community. A way around this would be to enable applicants for funding to leverage funding in different Departments through Creative Ireland with different timelines so that one does not have to wait until December for confirmation of funding commencing in January.

In general terms there remains the issue where in many deprived communities education is one thing that impacts on continuing deprivation. So many people who are educated leave those communities and it is therefore imperative that role models within these communities continue to be developed in order to sustain lifelong learning within the communities themselves. There is no point in having a goal of creating an educational intervention if it is not retained and sustained within communities. The arts are part of that framework of success which is critical to the success of the regeneration and continued development of communities.

Accessibility

Those with disabilities are continuing to miss out on arts performances across the country due to the lack of implementing technologies at events which can facilitate access to performances. The particular issue of a drop in the provision of audio-description and captioning as means of access was raised as an issue of growing concern. For example in the case of theatre performances, for the period from 2014 through to 2017, access was provided in the main to touring performances and as part of work scheme. However the reduction in the number of tours in recent years has meant fewer opportunities to provide audio description and captioning for the hard-of-hearing and seeing. A way around this would be to change the

model whereby theatre companies would work with specific venues in developing and providing workshops and support of audio-description and captioning. By adopting a venue-based approach, a longer term view could be taken whereby support for a number of shows each year at specific venues throughout the country to develop them as hubs and an audience for access.

There was a strong view expressed during the discussion that support for enabling audiences participation must also be counterbalanced by support for the makers and creators. Many artists leave because currently it is a very difficult place in which to maintain a professional practice and there is now a serious risk of losing generations of artists. This is very much lost in much of the discussion on arts funding and the thinking about the arts in Ireland. Age and Opportunity Ireland referred to research indicating that persons with disabilities want to do the same as everybody else but are impeded by barriers to attendance such as cost, no one to go out with, and transport. When surveyed, 94% of people with disabilities said they had cut back on at least one of their social activities in the previous five years.

Conclusion

The discussion clearly reflected overall agreement that, if arts is to be for all, ongoing work on access and being able to encourage a broader base into the stream of arts education is important as it is from the education sector art makers will come. Access programmes, which can change that stream of people coming into arts education, are critical in breaking down the socioeconomic barriers and allowing people to see themselves as having the right to participate in or be part of the creative community. However the attitude towards art must also be changed and seen as something that is endorsed and a business that represents those who are investing their skills and time in an enterprise. In this way, they must be

facilitated in moulding themselves and others around them into a fabric that society appreciates and understands but also sees as sustainable. Therefore true development of the arts cannot come about until one develops the framework and foundations on which they are set, as otherwise they are doomed to fail. A combined platform of policy, strategy and resources is imperative in achieving this.

A transcript of the discussion held with the Joint Committee is available on the Committee's website at:

https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/2018-06-20/2/

3.6 National Arts Festivals

3.6.1 Galway International Arts Festival (GIAF)

The GIAF is a cultural organisation producing one of Europe's leading international arts festivals in Galway in July each year which covers a range of art forms, including theatre, dance, music, opera, street spectacle, visual arts, discussion and comedy. In addition to being a festival it develops and produces new work that tours nationally and internationally, and presents a major discussion platform called First Thought Talks. In the last five years, the organisation has produced, or co-produced, 15 productions and, with its partners, has toured to London, Paris, New York, Edinburgh, Chicago, Adelaide, Sydney, Hong Kong and Washington.

In its presentation to the Committee, festival representatives outlined the festival's success over the years and its future plans to grow the brand nationally and internationally with a view to being a main player in the European Capital of Culture in 2020, to be hosted by the City of Galway. Festival organisers see this event as being hugely important for the west

of Ireland and the wider cultural community in Ireland. It is also important that ambitious projects be funded by the State and that festivals be funded to produce new work which can be shared across the festivals network and brought to wider audiences.

A copy of the Festival's Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-07-05_opening-statement-john-crumlish-chief-executive-galway-international-arts-festival_en.pdf

3.6.2 Tyrone Guthrie Centre

The Tyrone Guthrie Centre,¹⁷ based in Annaghmakerrig in Co. Monaghan, is a workplace and retreat for creative artists supported by The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland and the Office of Public Works. Specific projects under its remit are funded also by the Department of Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht and the Ulster Villages & Garden Fund. Since it first opened in 1981 the Centre has been providing support to approximately 7,000 artists across all disciplines, nationally and internationally.

The Centre's work is guided by the overarching policy principle to provide the conditions in which artists can focus exclusively and for extended periods on the creation of their work. Its overall policy is to focus on ensuring an environment (physical and psychological) conducive to producing artistic works of quality across a wide range of creative disciplines.

¹⁷ <http://www.tyroneguthrie.ie/>

In addition to these partnerships and funders, the Centre has an on-going relationship with a variety of arts trusts and organisations which include The Stewart Parker Trust and Theatre Forum. Annaghmakerrig maintains a good and evolving relationship with local authorities and Arts Officers through the Regional Bursary Scheme, and international exchange bursaries, such as Virginia Centre Creative Arts, US, and Varuna Writers House, Australia, provide a unique chance for Irish artists to work in new and stimulating cultural environments, and bring artists from all over the world to the Centre.

A copy of the Centre's Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-07-05_opening-statement-robert-mcdonald-director-tyrone-guthrie-centre_en.pdf

3.6.3 Kilkenny Arts Festival

The Kilkenny Arts Festival is a ten day festival taking place since 1974 with events spread out amongst Kilkenny's historic churches, castle, courtyards, townhouses and gardens. While classical music has been the festival's core over the years, poetry has also featured prominently. In recent times a new initiative, Marble City Sessions, is a cross-genre series of unique musical collaborations featuring a range of artists-in-residence, hosted and co-curated by Irish traditional musician Martin Hayes.

In spite of the festival's success over the years, Committee members were reminded by representatives from the festival of the fragility of the sector and the challenges for festival organisers in mobilising alternative spaces in a city where the formal infrastructure for performances is poor and the venues are scarce. The infrastructure of the professionalisation of the arts, the teams behind the machinery that get artists' best work on to stages and concert hall platforms, requires volunteers of extraordinary

commitment and faith in the people leading the festivals and organisations. Without the communities' support, they would quickly collapse. That needs to be cherished and celebrated in a very deep and meaningful way as part of the ambition towards international work and "platforming" of new work in festivals.

3.6.4 Listowel Writers' Week

Listowel Writers' Week was set up by its founding members John B Keane, Bryan MacMahon and Seamus Wilmot, to celebrate these writers and to provide an opportunity for writers in general to develop their talents and meet new audiences through creating writing workshops. In 2012 a new strand was added to the Festival, Young Adult BookFest designed specifically for secondary school students, and in 2014 the Listowel Writers' Week Children's Programme was renamed and registered as The National Children's Literary Festival.

What is considered to be Ireland's longest running literary festival, it will celebrate its 50th year in 2020. It continues to attract new audiences by running well-managed arts events and providing value and choice and caters for younger audiences through building and growing Children's Festival and Young Adult BookFest. However representatives from the festival also referred to challenges for Writer's Week around funding, growth, staff, sponsorship, competition and accessibility. In spite of these challenges 15,000 people are attracted to Listowel for the annual writers' week and 15% of these come from outside Ireland.

A copy of the Listowel Writers Week Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-07-05_opening-statement-maire-logue-festival-manager-listowel-writer-s-week_en.pdf

3.6.5 Discussion with Committee members

Garda Vetting

Volunteerism and staffing were considered by members and representatives from the festivals as areas where challenges were arising in recent years in respect of the issue of Garda vetting in particular. While it is accepted that the process is necessary, the view was shared that it had become unnecessarily arduous and can cause practical problems and delays for festival and other event organisers. Witnesses to the Committee described how not only organisers and facilitators of its children's festival and young adults' festival must be Garda vetted but also authors coming down from Dublin who will have been Garda vetted in Dublin already but have to be vetted again if they come to Kerry. This lack of co-ordination makes programming and administering festivals difficult for the organisers and indeed can therefore be a barrier in enticing authors to come and attend and in recruiting volunteers, without whom it would be near impossible to organise a festival.

Synergies

There is no doubt that the benefit of festivals and other arts activities involving small and larger communities cannot but have a positive effect both individually and collectively. However the view was expressed that this can be improved by thinking of cleverer ways to further develop and provide more access to festival initiatives in providing a stronger voice for the arts and delivering the message on the massive part they play, from both a Dionysian and civic point of view. One way to enhance this is to ensure that there are synergies between the organisations in ensuring that the best is brought about by working closer together on new initiatives. Those taking part in this discussion described how festival organisers throughout the country already cooperate. However in order to enhance festivals collectively and work more towards a production-led model, there is a need to develop and grow a core group of theatre companies and individual artists with whom festival organisers can work on an ongoing

basis and maintain relationships which have grown from individual festivals.

Synergy, however, is not just within the festivals themselves but also between other entities such as production companies, Irish artists working internationally, practitioners, venues, composers, writers, poets and arts managers etc. It is important to accept that a country the size of Ireland has to have those synergies which today remain strong and have been the reason for much of success in the arts to date in spite of huge financial impediments.

Funding

As in some of the other discussions, funding is top of the list of challenges facing arts festival organisers and others in the arts. There was agreement that State funding for the arts undoubtedly yields a strong return in terms of all the benefits for the individual and for society in general that arise therefrom. However, the view was strongly expressed that this level of funding must be greatly increased. The success of all of the festivals represented at this Committee meeting was seen to be due in the main, not to funding *per se*, but to the people who drive them. Festivals remain underfunded and much more can be achieved with increased funding.

Arts festivals representatives described to members how many arts organisations are active in different ways. Their role in broader advocacy and stronger lobbying has resulted in increased demand for funding. Generally in their national lobbying and advocacy and in engagement with the Houses of the Oireachtas and the Government, that effort is channelled through the participation of arts organisations in the National

Campaign for the Arts,¹⁸ a volunteer-led, grassroots movement that makes the case for the arts in Ireland which spends a significant amount of time and energy in crafting a position on behalf of the sector and then seeking to engage with key decision makers in the political sphere, be they elected Members, Ministers or key officials. Over the past year there has been heavy engagement on the question of a political commitment from Government to double arts funding and to provide a roadmap with staging posts through which a commitment to double arts funding could be delivered in a clear and planned way that would give confidence to the sector and which would enable planning by the sector to respond to it. In order to unlock the value of public investment on the capital side a seven or ten-year plan needs to be laid out to which the entire sector, as well as public bodies, can respond.

Policy

One of the key things lacking in being able to drive through effective public policy in culture has been a cross-governmental mechanism that could drive it through. Society and policy makers must now move away from regarding culture as an optional activity to being a right for everybody. The Department of the Taoiseach must drive cohesion between other Government departments who share the culture and arts remit.

In extending the value of the arts throughout all of the country, account needs to be taken of the great distances involved, in spite of Ireland being a small country. This is very evident for festivals in smaller rural areas well away from the bigger towns which cannot enjoy the same success as the larger festivals, such as the Galway Arts Festival. While much work is being done to promote the arts in the region there is a strong need to prioritise such activity in order to get a better spread around the country.

¹⁸ <http://ncfa.ie/>

The transcripts of this discussion is available at the following link:

https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/2018-07-04/2/

3.7 Creative Ireland

Creative Ireland is a five-year, culture based, Government initiative which comes under the auspices of the Culture Division of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Officials from this department, the Department of Education, and Skills, and from Creative Ireland, provided information on the Creative Ireland programme to the Committee at its October 2018 session.

The programme, in essence, sets out to highlight the importance of human creativity for individual, community and national wellbeing by collaboration with Government departments, Government and non-Government agencies, local government, voluntary groups, and academic and cultural organisations. Based across its five core 'creative' pillars, (youth, the community, cultural infrastructure, creative excellence, and global reputation). It partners with other cultural and heritage bodies in working together across various policy areas to bring innovation and co-ordination to a range of important initiatives and policies that enable participation in creative activity at all stages of life.

2018 consisted in the main of progressing the programme's initiatives with a view to embedding important strategic relationships right across Government and looking to the longer term impact of some of the work of the Programme. The first year of the programme had a budget of €6m which was increased to €7.15m for 2019.

Members heard from the officials on some of the key areas of the Creative Ireland Programme's area of work which centres around cultural and creative education, creative communities, and a national creativity fund.

A copy of the Department's Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2018/2018-10-17_opening-statement-feargal-o-coigligh-assistant-secretary-department-of-culture-heritage-and-the-gaeltacht_en.pdf

3.7.1 Discussion with Committee Members

Funding

Creative Ireland presented to Committee members some of the key areas of its programme's work in 2018. One of these, cultural and creative education, was described as 'potentially the most transformative part of Creative Ireland's work' with the main goal of ensuring that every child in Ireland had practical access to tuition, experience and participation in music, drama, art and coding by 2022. One initiative in bringing this about involved 150 creative schools where almost 10% of schools nationally indicated that they wished to be known as creative schools and to take part in the programme. 50 creative associates and teachers have been recruited and provided with some training in this field and this is now spreading out across 150 schools to work with children, teachers and principals to develop a bespoke creative plan for each school.

Another area of progress described to the Committee was the creative communities pillar consisting of the establishment of cross-sectoral culture teams funded by both the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government. This interdepartmental funding provides the real value to the

programme and has thus far facilitated the presence of a Creative Ireland co-ordinator within every local authority and has allowed Creative Ireland to increase activity and capacity-building throughout local communities.

On the question from one Committee member of there having been some concern expressed during the setting up of Creative Ireland that the initiative could be used for the purposes of promoting Government activities rather than the development of the sector, the Department explained that it had led a cross-Government programme in the Ireland 2016 Centenary programme by working with different agencies throughout the State. When looking back to the reason for its success there was a realisation that the cross-cutting nature, engagement on the ground and work by local authorities, played major parts. This needed to be built upon and became the basic structure that underpinned the Creative Ireland programme. The focus of engagement must be on the programme, where it is not advertising Government but rather advertising and promoting culture and creativity at the local level.

Clarification was also sought during the discussion on the new funding model set up for Creative Ireland and the necessity for such when there was already an arts funding model in the Arts Council, which had a very clear arm's length policy of distributing State funds throughout the country. Members sought assurance that the new funding model was perfectly safe with regard to the delivery of funds and was not being influenced by the State and was accessible to real artists on the ground who need funds.

The Department described how it had not had a history of working with the Arts Council nor with the Department of Education and Skills and further emphasised that neither that Department nor the Arts Council would have been able to work together in delivering the Creative Schools

programme were it not for the glue to bring everything together provided by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. Such collaboration does not get in the way of the Arts Council's arm's length principle, a principle which should not lead to the creation of artificial barriers that prevent interested parties working together. The core point of the programme was to ensure that the cultural teams referred to were put in place for the first time. This has been very successful and could only have come about with the impetus and thrust of the Department which has a broader responsibility for engaging in our culture.

Creative Ireland, for its part, elaborated further on the Department's contribution explaining that the only circumstances under which it funded professional artists was under the national creativity fund, where it had been approached by certain arts organisations who in its view were doing something quite innovative. Creative Ireland does not replace any of the arts Council's roles but acts more as a facilitator in bringing different Departments to the table in supporting projects that fall between two stools and which at the national level might be funded as pilot projects under the national creativity fund.

The Department of Education and Skills saw the benefit of Creative Ireland as allowing it, through co-operation between other departments, the Arts Council and other bodies, to identify innovative ways to assist schools and students in and out of school in becoming creative and in identifying best practice, and as a great opportunity for its schools to become involved.

The Irish Language

Concern was expressed at the lack of any reference to the language in the speakers' presentations to the Committee given the year that was in it, *Bliain na Gaeilge*, and the general acceptance across the State of Irish being one of the most important elements in our national culture. It was

important therefore to see language having a stronger role in Culture Ireland rather than as an afterthought. More specifically, it was pointed out that of the funding allocated to different streams, the Irish language received only approximately 3%, and while one can accept that Creative Ireland does not want to be prescriptive about what is achieved through certain funding, it should be cognisant of the State's 20 year strategy for the Irish language and be proactive with regard to coordination with this Strategy in ensuring it is part of the normal funding and development in all aspects of the Department.

Creative Ireland reminded those present that about one-third of its budget goes to the creative communities via the local authorities and it is they who may decide that they wish to do something around the Irish language under *Bliain na Gaeilge* or around the arts, heritage or the libraries programme. In addition to this, the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht directly supports Ealaíon na Gaeltachta and, through the Creative Ireland fund, it has asked Creative Ireland to help it develop an Irish language strategy for drama, which is funded under the national creativity fund. It is the local authorities who have decided the allocation between *Bliain na Gaeilge* and other pillars of Creative Ireland's activity.

Rural Communities and Access to Funding

The question was raised as to how accessible funding is to rural communities bearing in mind that some communities can deliver quite a lot with very little. Many communities, however, fall between two stools as they may be very active on the ground but are off the radar of the local authority. Some struggle with bureaucracy and may need some assistance in filling in applications and being made aware of what is available.

Creative Ireland in response, said that the programme prioritised the rural areas because every local authority gets the same amount of money. From what it hears on the ground, the funding is very accessible because

it is somebody local to the community who is responsible for dispersing that funding and not Creative Ireland headquarters.

Education

The Department of Education and Skills was asked what plans were in train for the training of teachers in creativity and the arts in education. While there is much continued professional development (CPD) the Committee sought further information on its funding and whether it would continue on an ongoing basis and be tied in to the teacher training colleges.

The Department of Education and Skills referred to two of the actions in the creative youth pillar which are specifically focused on CPD in primary and post-primary schools. The teacher-artist partnership action, a pilot phase which pre-dated Creative Ireland, is currently being fast-tracked and embraced under Creative Ireland. As part of the partnership programme, primary school teachers can undertake a course in the summer run in any of the 21 education centres countrywide attended by both teachers and by artist facilitators. Teachers and artists spend the week identifying programmes to help enhance creativity in the schools. When the teachers go back to the schools, they have an opportunity to apply the learning they acquired during the previous summer. The programme also includes a number of artist residencies where the artist participating in the teacher-artist partnership programme would have a residency in a school for a term working with the teachers and students in developing creativity in the school.

The Department for Education and Skills also referred to its 'Arts in Junior Cycle' programme which seeks to provide CPD to teachers in delivering the junior cycle subjects in creative ways. One of the challenges identified was how to work with the senior cycle schools in further embedding creativity in addressing the movement of focus on the exam process. A number of DEIS schools were also seen to have a level of creativity and

artistic projects that are out of proportion to their numbers in that many of the initiatives in DEIS schools are in the artistic space. The Department works closely with the DEIS schools, their students and teachers to ensure they benefit fully from the Creative Ireland experience.

However the point was strongly made by a member that unless credence is given to the arts for children from the ages of 9, 10 and 11, which has not been done for many years, and then from the ages of 14, 15 and 16, people will not take up the arts.

Interdepartmental Cooperation

The view was expressed during the discussion that the Creative Ireland Programme was being allocated a great deal of money for being an all-Government programme, and this was welcomed in that it would have an influence across all departments on the way they do business, communicate or present matters to the public with regard to arts and culture. However the question was raised as to how widely across the various Government departments' network was this influence being spread.

Creative Ireland acknowledged that this was indeed a challenge and that there were very few all-Government initiatives and not as many other programmes as ambitious as the Creative Ireland programme. Its work with creative communities means it will be working closely with rural and community development and housing and planning, but less so with other departments. Its challenge therefore, as a small team, is to be effective and this is helped by the fact that it reports directly to the Department of the Taoiseach.

Evaluation

With regard to evaluating projects, the selection committee has developed evaluation for all of the creative youth pillar. There are different ways in which projects are measured, evaluated and tracked, and the Creative Ireland co-ordinator and all the culture teams come together four to five times a year to appraise progress and share good practice. Furthermore, the creative communities fund can be by track location, by audience numbers, by art form and by pillar. In Creative Ireland's view there is more detailed evaluation of its programme than many other programmes and no money can be drawn down unless there are invoices from the local authority. There is continual contact with the local authorities and the Creative Ireland team meets regularly with the city and county managers and the culture and creative teams.

The Department of Education and Skills described how it ensured that all schools, or as many as possible, can benefit from the lessons from Creative Ireland and that it was not intended to wait until the programme was over to spread the word to other schools. It was confident that at the end of Creative Ireland in 2022 or 2023, everything would not fall flat in that the charter was already there. An advisory group of experts across a number of Departments, and the arts and creativity fields, had also been recently put in place to advise a high-level steering group on the creative youth pillar as to the success of the implementation of its actions and, critically, to look at Creative Ireland and Creative Youth after 2022. One of the aims of the project is to ensure that it will have a life after the Creative Ireland programme.

A transcript of the discussion held with the Joint Committee is available on the Committee's website at:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/debateRecord/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/2018-10-17/debate/mul@/main.pdf

3.8 Why the Arts matter

Four key-figures involved in the arts, a poet, a musician, a philosopher and a theatre director attended the final Committee meeting on the theme of 'Why the Arts Matter'.

3.8.1 Garry Hynes

Garry Hynes, theatre director shared her view that fundamental to all human activity is the capacity to imagine which facilitates creativity in all of society. Creativity is fundamental to every human being at each and every moment of our lives, irrespective of background or education or the kinds of communities we live in.

In today's society we are allowing ourselves to become isolated from one another and it is the act of the imagining which can protect us from this isolation. Engaging in imagining through the practicing of art, no matter what the form, needs always to be protected and nourished through structures which facilitate participation by all in creating the circumstances whereby makers can live decent and respected lives.

However one group of artists, the actors, continue to earn below the minimum wage and this cannot be accepted. It is not acceptable today that the funding of our artists, whom we so clearly and obviously rely on to protect our national reputation, is the lowest per capita income of the European Union.

A copy of Garry Hynes' Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2019/2019-01-23_opening-statement-gary-hynes-artistic-director-druid-theatre_en.pdf

3.8.2 Philip King

Philip King, Musician and broadcaster, stated that the arts matter because, along with creativity and culture, they are essential to our wellbeing and are also valuable in their own right as uniquely irreplaceable human activities. They confer individual and personal benefits by enabling us to imagine, invent, interpret and communicate diverse ways of seeing the world. In creating, promoting and sharing, the arts add communal and societal value and diversity to all, while at the same time adding value to Ireland's reputation globally and for their potential to strengthen Ireland's role in bilateral relationships by enriching common ground.

There is now significant convergence of what creativity and the arts can offer. Irish artists embody the values that the rest of indigenous exporting service and product industries must emulate: authenticity, excellence, creativity, inclusiveness and differentiation. In this way, they provide a unique contribution which is recognised and valued worldwide.

Artists and people who choose a career in the creative industries have skills which can be shared by all and which include in the main: developing and adapting a clear vision, managing uncertainty, maximising return from scant resources that are erratically and unevenly distributed, and planning strategically in a volatile and dynamic environment whose key constant is change.

A copy of Philip King's Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2019/2019-01-23_opening-statement-philip-king-broadcaster_en.pdf

3.8.3 Br Mark Patrick Hederman

Mark Patrick Hederman, philosopher and educationalist, stated that art needed no justification and will survive and endure even where repudiated or indeed persecuted. The twenty-first century is a cultural tsunami that has washed away most sign-posts and values which constituted the western world as we have known it up to now. Our great dilemma is that we are trying to prepare ourselves for a world which we will never be able to forecast and it is only our imagination which can help us to prepare for the future. If open to change, this future is alive with possibility. The earliest visions of this future occur mostly because someone has imagined and described them and it is often works of art which provide the first hints. Artists are there to harvest possible shapes for the future, and to sketch in outline what we might become. While there are many imperatives and considerations which determine the steps we take, the voice of artists and the educating influence of art should be prominent.

Art of the future has no template, no guide, no intellectual categories; it feels its way forward, finding words beyond the vocabulary of any language we currently know. A dialogue should happen between artists and the rest of society. Our socio-cultural ambience has to become infused with the understanding which such art inspires so that the movement forward which is initiated, energised, directed and informed by the spirit of that art, and shaped by the space cleared for us by such work. Art can help us elaborate frameworks, structures and behavioural patterns that might allow us to live together in harmony.

A copy of Mark Hederman's Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2019/2019-01-23_opening-statement-fr-mark-patrick-hederman-glenstal-abbey_en.pdf

3.8.4 Theo Dorgan

Theo Dorgan, poet, said it was not irrelevant that three of the seven signatories of the Irish Proclamation were poets, and that James Connolly was a talented songwriter. The 30 years leading up to the Rising was a period of enormous cultural and artistic ferment and the Republic we now enjoy was, and still is, a product of liberated imagination. We imagined our liberty, our independence, and had the courage to imagine ourselves free and self-determined, and we made it come to pass. We should never underestimate the power of imagination as this is where everything begins. Imagining ourselves forward in our lives is what we do and is the primary instrument by which we grow as human beings, and as a society.

The primary question we face now in Ireland is, who do we want to be? Who we want to be will be shaped and determined by what we do. Whether we are artists or not, we are all in one way or another partaking in something artistic. We turn to books, cinema, galleries, concert halls and small back rooms in pubs that shelter our music, for a sense of something greater and more meaningful in life. As human beings we are formed and shaped to want and need the comfort and sustenance of having our imaginations fed and challenged, stretched and enlightened. The imagination is our primary shaping power; the artist is one of us, and their gift to us is the generous and necessary work they do in cultivating, exploring and demonstrating, day in and day out, the unstoppable and exhilarating power of the imagination.

In spite of this we are content to allow most artists to be ruthlessly condemned to lives of poverty and choose to ignore that artists are not just a necessary economy but indispensable to civilisation and that monies spent are an investment which yields great return. It is such investment that makes it possible for us to answer, over and over again, the only question that truly matters - who do we want to be? The simple answer,

given by the monks of the Middle Ages who fanned out across a Europe plunged in turmoil and in darkness, is that we want to be a light to the world.

A copy of Theo Dorgan's Opening Statement to the Committee is available at the Joint Committee's website here:

https://data.oireachtas.ie/ie/oireachtas/committee/dail/32/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/submissions/2019/2019-01-23_opening-statement-theo-dorgan_en.pdf

3.8.5 Discussion with Committee members

Those taking part in the discussion with Committee members were insistent that there was an overall emphasis by the powers that be on the fiscal return and value of the arts. One contributor reminded those present of the 2011 Indecon Report '*Assessment of the Economic Impact of the Arts in Ireland*'¹⁹ which stated that €47m of the €68m allocated to the arts that year was returned to the exchequer as PAYE, PRSI and VAT from organisations kept in being with the aid of Council grants. Where culture goes, commerce follows!

If one looks at the depictions of Irish people as they left Ireland in their hundreds of thousands after the Famine, they are seen as not carrying any worldly goods and therefore appear worthless. However, when they arrived at their destinations, particularly at large cities on the eastern seaboard of the United States, they unpacked their emotional baggage and something of rare and powerful value became apparent. The cultural and artistic legacy of these people is ever so present today, almost two centuries later. However such culture and arts is now threatened by a world that has become more virtual, augmented and artificial. Irish people

¹⁹ http://www.artscouncil.ie/uploadedFiles/Indecon_Update_Report_fin.pdf

possess in their bag of imagination something that enables them to be tactile, human and engaging and which is the very antidote to, what was described by one witness as, "the digital lonely life". Technological industries are now discussing the inclusion of 'Arts; to the STEM acronym, thus demonstrating the additional impetus of the arts, imagination, and creativity to technology. The naturally occurring resource of imagination, that gives us the song, the poem, the film and the Oscar award, is the same as that which designs the chip that goes into a processor. Unless we value imagination, which is a hard thing to quantify, and educate the influence, it will affect everything that is happening in technology in the future.

One contributor to the discussion emphasised that anything that cannot be automated would become very valuable. Arts are the primary tool of expression of one's imagination and after a century of independence, if we do not start to create the conditions where we grow, own and monetise our own intellectual and 'arts' property, Ireland will never have a real wealth proposition that will address health, housing, education etc.

The future of arts is greatly imperilled if one insists in perpetuating the inherited post-colonial idea of the arts as something that all right-thinking people must be in favour of. If left at that, nothing follows. Society must continue to see art as being made by individuals and by collectives of individuals who are driven by a passion for a particular form. Arts are everywhere and used by everyone and become complete when they meet their audience. The artists' role is crucial in this encounter as it is they who connect with the surrounding community and society.

How do we make ourselves audible and visible? If we are not audible and visible, we will not be considerable and will not be a consideration.

However, we are making a hugely valuable contribution in a world that is more digital, more virtual and more artificial. It is a national resource, which puts us on the map and makes us audible, visible and considerable. It is both criminal and shameful not to invest in this resource. This committee, as our representative, must take that message to the heart of Government. We are not asking members to do that for us. We are talking here about identity, how we are viewed and the value proposition for an Ireland of the 21st century. (Philip King)

The Committee was reminded that when we talk about supporting the arts in Ireland, we are not talking about piously making a small allocation towards a few curious individuals who seem to have inexplicable passions for various forms of the arts; we are talking about all of us together. It is from the imagination of all of us the arts spring forward and find their expression. But in current times such expression is stifled more and more by funding restraints. In simple and stark terms, we have elected to be poor in the service of the imagination and in the words of one of the witnesses, must ask ourselves “what kind of a people are we, when we claim the glories of our artists and treat them so shamefully?”

In securing a future for the arts and the artists we must ask ourselves “who do we want to be?”, and how can we best imagine ourselves in future centuries. Today’s globalisation aims to remove what is distinct and turn us into obedient consumers, but we should have the strength of character to think of ourselves differently, as people who value the imagination in business, in commerce, in street sweeping and, above all else, in governance. Therefore Government must also pose the question; how much better can it imagine itself to be? Can it take responsibility for the depth and the wealth of imagination in the Irish people, from the child yearning to be able to play the fiddle well enough to be at a Comhaltas session, to the young adult star struck at the thought of walking the stage and inhabiting invented characters?

Buildings need to be maintained and national cultural institutions need to be maintained. However, artists do not live in those places; their work lives in those places, sometimes when they are dead. We need to look after the humans. The capital side is necessary but the other side of the column is essential because, without that, there is no art to put into these places. (Theo Dorgan)

Ireland has the good fortune to be able to look at practitioners, administrators and artists who have walked this road before us and provided a resource to be tapped into. This is a national resource and like any national resource, one cannot open-cast mine it, dig it all out, and put nothing back in. If artists are not audible and visible, they will not be considerable and will not be a consideration. The Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht therefore needs to say to Government that it is time we showed respect to those things we profess to value and to create a hospitable environment for the children of the nation and show we cherish them, not so much by imagining that everybody can become an artist, but by offering them the fruits of our artists' work and the practice of creative imagination as an integral part of their formation as citizens and as people. We should give these freely, with no foretold outcomes or demands, as a gift to help them disclose their imagination to themselves so that they can go and make what they will of the future!

It can be achieved simply - the Government must increase arts funding across the board. It is underfunded. We have spoken a great deal about funding the arts, which tends to make the issue abstract. What the Government would be doing would be funding its own citizens to make art in its own country. So many of them now are not - they are leaving and making it in other countries for other people. It is about increasing funding. (Gary Hynes)

All witnesses were strongly of the view that what is described above cannot be without increased funding for the arts. Artists themselves were

described as grossly underfunded and struggling to make a living. The numbers of those who stop being professional actors because they cannot even make the most rudimentary living from it are significant. We must not allow a situation where any organisation funded by any part of the Government pays less than the minimum wage. While there may be those willing to work for less than the minimum wage because they want to get on but it should not be allowed nor be the norm. It must therefore be clear where additional funding should go within the arts sector and one of these areas is the artists themselves. It is also important to remember that an increase in arts funding does not necessarily lead to an increase in artist's wages. Within the social protection system, there is a deep lack of understanding of what it means to craft a life in the arts; a life that can be quite punitive for artists, who often live in fear and scrutiny. While the social protection system should not be a safety net, reward or hand-out, it should be a recognition of the contribution everybody makes and one of our mechanisms of redistribution for the public good. As a society, we must create a situation where the health of the sector is always in view and must make sure that we do not have artists at the age of 40 who need private healthcare but who cannot afford it.

The Arts Council's annual subvention has still not returned to 2008 levels resulting today in the least amount of funding per capita for the arts compared to the rest of the EU. Arts officers in local authorities all over the country do not have the resources to fertilise and encourage nascent artistic endeavour. The centres and venues, which are a great resource, need to be resourced further to allow them to become sustained employers.

Policy towards the arts must change whereby the arts are not always seen to be just a tag on to something else of more importance. This is installed at an early age and it is now time to make the arts a subject, or rather a discipline, capable of its own independence within the education system.

Additional points for arts subject would be a start in raising arts to the levels they deserve and not something that borders on the extracurricular. When people decide not to teach the arts or to promote the arts in school they are going against the express interests and wishes of the people. The Leaving Certificate is in need of reform for it to develop within its curriculum some type of creativity rather than having everything to do with memory. As one contributor stated 'One doesn't need memory when one has Google'.

From a governmental perspective the arts must be an essential part of all departments and not the responsibility of one government department alone.

Our great dilemma is that we are trying to prepare ourselves for a world which we will never be able to forecast. Only imagination can help us to prepare for the future. How could any of us who grew up in the 1950s, 1960s or 1970s have prepared ourselves for the world of text, Twitter and tweet? The future is not something we step into as an already designed space. The future is ourselves as we choose to become. The future is alive with possibility to the extent that we are open to change. Change occurs most profitably in the wake of fundamental shifts in our way of being and these occur mostly because someone has imagined and described them. Works of art are the first hints we get, and artists are there to harvest possible shapes for the future and to sketch in outline what we might become. (Patrick Mark Hederman)

A transcript of the discussion held with the Joint Committee is available on the Committee's website at:

https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/debate/joint_committee_on_culture_heritage_and_the_gaeltacht/2019-01-23/3/

Appendix 1 – Committee Witnesses

Date	Witnesses
17 January 2018	Governance and the Arts: The Arts Council The Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
14 February 2018	Arts and Education The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment The National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals Creative Ireland – Arts in Education Charter Creating the Arts Ireland (Irish Museum of Modern Art and National Museum of Ireland) The Arts Council
28 February 2018	Na hEalaíona agus an Ghaeilge Foras na Gaeilge Údarás na Gaeltachta An Chomhairle Ealaíon Fibín Teo
09 May 2018	Na hEalaíona agus an Ghaeilge (ar lean) Foras na Gaeilge Údarás na Gaeltachta An Chomhairle Ealaíon Fibín Teo
23 May 2018	Music in Ireland Today Conservatory of Music and Drama – DIT Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann Sing Out with Strings – Irish Chamber Orchestra Music Generation
20 June 2018	The Arts in Society

	Age and Opportunity NCAD Outreach Programme Sherkin Island Development Society Arts and Disability Ireland McAuley Place
04 July 2018	National Arts Festivals Listowel Writers' Week Tyrone Guthrie Centre Galway Arts Festival (Jane Daly) Kilkenny Arts Festival (Eugene Downes)
17 October 2018	Creative Ireland Department Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht Department of Education and Skills
23 January 2019	Why the Arts Matter – General Observations Mark Hedermann - Philosopher Theo Dorgan - Poet Philip King - Musician Garry Hynes – Theatre Director

Appendix 2 – Members of the Committee

Chairperson: Aengus Ó Snodaigh (Sinn Féin)

Deputies

Seán Canny (Independent)

Michael Collins (Independent) – Rural Independent Group

Danny Healy Re (Independent) - Rural Independent Group

Martin Heydon (Fine Gael)

Éamon Ó Cuív (Fianna Fáil)

Niamh Smyth (Fianna Fáil)

Senators

Maura Hopkins (Fine Gael)

Marie-Louise O'Donnell (Independent)

Aodhán Ó Ríordáin (Labour)

Fintan Warfield (Sinn Féin)

Notes:

1. Deputies nominated by the Dáil Committee of Selection and appointed by Order of the Dáil of 16 June 2016.
2. Senators nominated by the Seanad Committee of Selection and appointed by Order of the Seanad on 21 July 2016.
3. Deputy Michael Collins was elected vice-Chairman on 2 November 2016
4. Deputy Seán Canney replaced Ciaran Cannon under the Eleventh Report of the Standing Committee of Selection – 13 July 2017
5. Deputy Aengus Ó Snodaigh replaced Peadar Tóibín as Chair under the Twenty-Second Report of the Standing Committee of Selection and Appointment in accordance with Standing Order 27F, copies of which were laid before Dáil Éireann on 8th November, 2018, and pursuant to Standing Order 93(2).

Appendix 3 – Terms of reference of Committee

COMMITTEE ON ARTS, HERITAGE, REGIONAL, RURAL AND GAELTACHT AFFAIRS

TERMS OF REFERENCE

a. Functions of the Committee – derived from Standing Orders [DSO 84A; SSO 70A]

(1) The Select Committee shall consider and report to the Dáil on—

(a) such aspects of the expenditure, administration and policy of a Government Department or Departments and associated public bodies as the Committee may select, and

(b) European Union matters within the remit of the relevant Department or Departments.

(2) The Select Committee appointed pursuant to this Standing Order may be joined with a Select Committee appointed by Seanad Éireann for the purposes of the functions set out in this Standing Order, other than at paragraph (3), and to report thereon to both Houses of the Oireachtas.

(3) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), the Select Committee appointed pursuant to this Standing Order shall consider, in respect of the relevant Department or Departments, such—

(a) Bills,

(b) proposals contained in any motion, including any motion within the meaning of Standing Order 187,

(c) Estimates for Public Services, and

(d) other matters

as shall be referred to the Select Committee by the Dáil,
and

(e) Annual Output Statements including performance, efficiency and effectiveness in the use of public monies, and

(f) such Value for Money and Policy Reviews as the Select Committee may select.

(4) The Joint Committee may consider the following matters in respect of the relevant Department or Departments and associated public bodies:

(a) matters of policy and governance for which the Minister is officially responsible,

(b) public affairs administered by the Department,

(c) policy issues arising from Value for Money and Policy Reviews conducted or commissioned by the Department,

(d) Government policy and governance in respect of bodies under the aegis of the Department,

(e) policy and governance issues concerning bodies which are partly or wholly funded by the State or which are established or appointed by a member of the Government or the Oireachtas,

(f) the general scheme or draft heads of any Bill,

(g) any post-enactment report laid before either House or both Houses by a member of the Government or Minister of State on any Bill enacted by the Houses of the Oireachtas,

(h) statutory instruments, including those laid or laid in draft before either House or both Houses and those made under the European Communities Acts 1972 to 2009,

(i) strategy statements laid before either or both Houses of the Oireachtas pursuant to the Public Service Management Act 1997,

(j) annual reports or annual reports and accounts, required by law, and laid before either or both Houses of the Oireachtas, of the Department or bodies referred to in subparagraphs (d) and (e) and the overall performance and operational results, statements of strategy and corporate plans of such bodies, and

(k) such other matters as may be referred to it by the Dáil from time to time.

(5) Without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (1), the Joint Committee appointed pursuant to this Standing Order shall consider, in respect of the relevant Department or Departments—

(a) EU draft legislative acts standing referred to the Select Committee under Standing Order 114, including the compliance of such acts with the principle of subsidiarity,

(b) other proposals for EU legislation and related policy issues, including programmes and guidelines prepared by the European Commission as a basis of possible legislative action,

(c) non-legislative documents published by any EU institution in relation to EU policy matters, and

(d) matters listed for consideration on the agenda for meetings of the relevant EU Council of Ministers and the outcome of such meetings.

(6) The Chairman of the Joint Committee appointed pursuant to this Standing Order, who shall be a member of Dáil Éireann, shall also be the Chairman of the Select Committee.

(7) The following may attend meetings of the Select or Joint Committee appointed pursuant to this Standing Order, for the purposes of the functions set out in paragraph (5) and may take part in proceedings

without having a right to vote or to move motions and amendments:

- (a) Members of the European Parliament elected from constituencies in Ireland, including Northern Ireland,
- (b) Members of the Irish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, and
- (c) at the invitation of the Committee, other Members of the European Parliament.

b. Scope and Context of Activities of Committees (as derived from Standing Orders) [DSO 84; SSO 70]

- (1) The Joint Committee may only consider such matters, engage in such activities, exercise such powers and discharge such functions as are specifically authorised under its orders of reference and under Standing Orders.
- (2) Such matters, activities, powers and functions shall be relevant to, and shall arise only in the context of, the preparation of a report to the Dáil and/or Seanad.
- (3) The Joint Committee shall not consider any matter which is being considered, or of which notice has been given of a proposal to consider, by the Committee of Public Accounts pursuant to Standing Order 186 and/or the Comptroller and Auditor General (Amendment) Act 1993.
- (4) The Joint Committee shall refrain from inquiring into in public session or publishing confidential information regarding any matter if so requested, for stated reasons given in writing, by—
 - (a) a member of the Government or a Minister of State, or
 - (b) the principal office-holder of a body under the aegis of a Department or which is partly or wholly funded by the State or established or appointed by a member of the Government or by the Oireachtas:

Provided that the Chairman may appeal any such request made to the Ceann Comhairle / Cathaoirleach whose decision shall be final.

- (5) It shall be an instruction to all Select Committees to which Bills are referred that they shall ensure that not more than two Select Committees shall meet to consider a Bill on any given day, unless the Dáil, after due notice given by the Chairman of the Select Committee, waives this instruction on motion made by the Taoiseach pursuant to Dáil Standing Order 28. The Chairmen of Select Committees shall have responsibility for compliance with this instruction.

