



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

## Official Report

# EUROPEAN AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Thursday 11 June 2015

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**EUROPEAN AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE**  
**11<sup>th</sup> Meeting 2015, Session 4**

**CONVENER**

\*Christina McKelvie (Hamilton, Larkhall and Stonehouse) (SNP)

**DEPUTY CONVENER**

\*Hanzala Malik (Glasgow) (Lab)

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

\*Roderick Campbell (North East Fife) (SNP)

\*Willie Coffey (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP)

\*Adam Ingram (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP)

\*Jamie McGrigor (Highlands and Islands) (Con)

\*Anne McTaggart (Glasgow) (Lab)

\*attended

**THE FOLLOWING ALSO PARTICIPATED:**

Mary Allison (Sportscotland)

Dr Lloyd Anderson (British Council Scotland)

Janet Archer (Creative Scotland)

Stew Fowle (Scottish Student Sport)

Neil Murray (National Theatre of Scotland)

Liam Sinclair (Scottish Dance Theatre)

Stuart Turner (EventScotland)

**CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE**

Katy Orr

**LOCATION**

The David Livingstone Room (CR6)



## Scottish Parliament

### European and External Relations Committee

Thursday 11 June 2015

*[The Convener opened the meeting at 09:32]*

### Decision on Taking Business in Private

**The Convener (Christina McKelvie):** Good morning and welcome to the European and External Relations Committee's 11th meeting in 2015. I make the usual request that mobile phones be switched off or put in silent mode.

We will go straight to the agenda. Item 1 is to decide whether to take in private item 4, which is consideration of our work programme, and any future consideration of our work programme. Do members agree to take that in private?

**Members** *indicated agreement.*

## Connecting Scotland Inquiry

09:33

**The Convener:** Item 2 is the substantive issue this morning, which is the continuation of our inquiry on connecting Scotland. We will look at the cultural and sport aspects of our place in the world and at what we give to and get from the world in those areas.

We have a number of representatives from many organisations. I will go around the table and let everybody introduce themselves. I am Christina McKelvie, the committee's convener.

**Hanzala Malik (Glasgow) (Lab):** I am the committee's deputy convener and an MSP for Glasgow.

**Willie Coffey (Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley) (SNP):** I am the MSP for Kilmarnock and Irvine Valley.

**Neil Murray (National Theatre of Scotland):** I am the executive producer of the National Theatre of Scotland.

**Roderick Campbell (North East Fife) (SNP):** I am the MSP for North East Fife.

**Stew Fowlie (Scottish Student Sport):** I am the chief operating officer at Scottish Student Sport.

**Adam Ingram (Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley) (SNP):** I am the MSP for Carrick, Cumnock and Doon Valley.

**Mary Allison (SportScotland):** I am head of strategic planning at sportscotland.

**Dr Lloyd Anderson (British Council Scotland):** I am the director of British Council Scotland.

**Stuart Turner (EventScotland):** I am the head of EventScotland.

**Janet Archer (Creative Scotland):** I am the chief executive of Creative Scotland.

**Jamie McGrigor (Highlands and Islands) (Con):** I am an MSP for the Highlands and Islands.

**Liam Sinclair (Scottish Dance Theatre):** I am the executive producer of Scottish Dance Theatre.

**Anne McTaggart (Glasgow) (Lab):** I am an MSP for the Glasgow area.

**The Convener:** I thank the witnesses who have come along and those who have given us written evidence, which has been helpful. The inquiry has generated a lot of interest across lots of sectors, and we have much reading to do to understand the work that is going on.

You can see that we have a round-table set-up. We want to create a free-flowing conversation. Catch my eye to make sure that I can bring you in, so that the meeting is a wee bit, but not too, structured and you can enjoy the interactions across the table. It would be excellent if you could do that.

From what I see and from my visit to New York during Scotland week, my opinion is that Scotland, all our national companies and our organisations—whether that is sportscotland, the National Theatre of Scotland, Creative Scotland or the British Council—seem to be known around the world and for the work that they do. If we mention “Black Watch”, the Commonwealth games or anything like that, we find that people have a keen understanding of what Scotland has given the world. What other interesting events, programmes and projects are you involved in that not only maintain but push forward the connections that we have around the world? How do we use them to tell our story? I am looking at you, Neil.

**Neil Murray:** Last in, first to speak. Is that the rule?

**The Convener:** We expected you to pirouette in and dance into your seat, but no.

**Anne McTaggart:** We are disappointed.

**Neil Murray:** I apologise.

This is not so much about the big one-off events as about a consistent presence and profile. The big one-off events are fantastic—at big festivals, the National Theatre of Scotland is often there with great companies from around the world—but we have managed to gain a reputation by consistently visiting and travelling.

I did a paper for my board the other day, which I will leave for the committee. It shows that we have done 17 international tours in eight years, many of them in the USA. For example, we were just in Chicago for the fifth time. That level of familiarity means that we go there and an audience come to see us because they have seen our work on two or three previous occasions. It is not always the same people, but we start to build a groundswell and the press in the city start to notice us.

When companies go abroad, they tend to take their best work—I am sure that Liam Sinclair and others will acknowledge that. We take the shows that work, not the ones that do not really work, so people see the best of us.

It is hard to build such consistency. We are lucky because we are a bigger company than many other companies in Scotland and have had the benefit of the Scottish Government's international touring fund, which has been a fantastic help to us in achieving the profile that we have. One-off visits tend not to have the same

impact because every time feels like the first time whereas, if we go back, even if not to the same places, people have heard that we were in Washington, Chicago or Sydney last year.

These are not just holiday tours, by the way. They are hard work.

**Janet Archer:** Our evidence shows that the international element of the work of the organisations that we fund is really important. Something like 80 per cent of the organisations that receive regular funding from Creative Scotland work internationally. I am not sure whether this statistic is accurate, but I was told the other day that only 8 per cent of Scottish businesses export internationally. That is an interesting statistic.

The opportunities that cultural engagement in other countries provides could open up scope for taking Scotland's brand—not only its culture but all that surrounds culture in Scotland—into different parts of the world. We are just about to produce our creative industries strategy and will focus very much on the sense of place and global reach as a key strand in it.

**Dr Anderson:** The Government's economic strategy has two areas under internationalisation. One is influencing the world around Scotland, which is about promoting Scotland abroad and addressing the issues that matter most to helping Scotland to flourish.

The other theme is creating an environment in Scotland that supports a better understanding of international opportunities. As Janet Archer suggested, promoting an international mindset at home is just as important as promoting Scotland abroad.

We work in both areas. The British Council exists to create international opportunities for the people of the United Kingdom and other countries. We have over 200 offices in more than 100 countries and we reach 24 million people face to face.

At any time, a lot of programmes and events are taking place. In the arts, there has been a focus on bilateral years. There is a UK and Brazil bilateral programme called transform, which is running for five years; a bilateral programme with China; and a bilateral programme with Mexico. These are what are called seasons, year on year, in which a particular effort is made to encourage cultural exchange with another country.

We should not forget about the international mindset at home, for which we have a number of programmes such as Erasmus+, foreign language assistants, the International Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience programme and connecting classrooms. These

are all designed to get young Scots to be more international in their outlook and to think internationally.

**The Convener:** The last time we spoke, the number of young people who were taking up Erasmus and other programmes had dropped. Lots of young people were coming to Scotland, but not as many Scots were going out. There was a concerted effort to change that. Has that changed?

**Dr Anderson:** It has. The take-up of Erasmus has increased a lot in the past year. Unfortunately, the take-up of connecting classrooms has gone down, so we have to do more work to get schools to take the international agenda seriously.

In 2014-15, we worked with about 940 organisations across Scotland, including 588 schools, 18 higher education institutions and 25 further education institutions. We are working with a large percentage of schools, but the numbers have gone down rather than up.

Fewer foreign language assistants come to Scotland now. The numbers of language assistants who are going abroad has stayed high, so that is the converse of the problem with student flows.

**Stew Fowlie:** It is worth reflecting that it is normal for colleges and universities to operate in an international way. I was part of a student football team that had 12 nationalities in it. That is hugely enriching for everybody.

I trust that the committee will have received loftier reports from the institutions as part of its inquiry. My job is to tie that back to sport and activity. I have highlighted three themes in our brief submission, which we might talk about later.

There are two interesting points to keep in mind. One is where we should position Scotland. There is a lot of activity at institutional level, against the institutions' priorities. There is quite a lot of activity at a British level, because of some of the structures that we work within. The question is where we place Scotland in all that. The answer to that is about how much we join up the different areas that are represented today—sport, education and culture.

My sense is that a lot of good stuff is going on, but it is not necessarily fully appreciated by everyone involved or properly tied together. There is probably a bit of room there. I hope that the committee got a sense from our brief submission of what a lot of activity there is and of some of the benefit of that work.

**The Convener:** The committee is attempting to do an exercise to map what is happening where. Given the volume of written evidence that we have had, that will prove a difficult piece of work to

undertake. However, it might be worth while to see what is happening where and at what frequency and intensity.

09:45

**Liam Sinclair:** I will pick up Neil Murray's point about consistency. We really noticed that on our tour to India last year, which built on a previous tour in 2012. We deliberately chose to structure the tour to allow more space for exploring partnerships while we were there, so that we not only presented work but developed our understanding of how the cultural infrastructure works in the various cities and locations on the tour. That is already having a deep impact on the company. We have been thinking about how we can take those partnerships forward and there is even talk of co-productions in some areas.

The profound effect on the professionals who go on such tours helps to develop the international outlook at home that Lloyd Anderson mentioned. The company's outlook has definitely shifted because of its extended tour last year. When the company returned from its tour in 2012, it felt that the tour was such a whirlwind that it was perhaps harder for the company to focus on what it meant and what it could mean for the company's future.

Profound international engagement takes time at every stage of the process, including planning and the commitment of resource. It also takes time in the delivery, so that we are not just shipping in our best shows and then shipping them out again. Opportunities for engagement can be built around that, and that shapes strategically how a company approaches international working when it is back at base.

**The Convener:** That was an interesting contribution.

Mary Allison and Stuart Turner have not contributed yet. I give them an opportunity to respond to what Liam Sinclair said about the legacy of international engagement. Perhaps Mary Allison can talk about the work that sportscotland has been involved in for the past few years.

**Mary Allison:** The obvious example of sport in an international context is from the gaining and staging of major events—Stuart Turner can speak to that—and the links to sport-specific bodies that collaborate to deliver those events.

From our perspective, an interesting and possibly somewhat untapped area in sport is international collaborations at more of a grass-roots level, which are extensive but relatively ad hoc. As Stew Fowlie said, in many universities—and sports clubs—a huge amount of international exchange is taking place. However, we have not harnessed that to the extent that we perhaps could

into well-supported, meaningful and structured programmes that deliver a bit more than is delivered at the moment.

That taps into the growing area of sport for change and sport for development where, although the sporting outcome is not the essential outcome, sport is a major hook on which other forms of international collaboration can take place. In the context of development or post-conflict areas, sport has been used as a tool for change and development. We could definitely grow, contribute to and learn from international collaboration on that. That scope for change definitely exists.

The work that we have done to stage major events is relatively well developed. We have a lot of experience of that. However, the issue is how we build on that for grass-roots engagement.

**The Convener:** What do you think about themed days and Scotland house at the Commonwealth games? I was at two themed days—one was on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender matters and the other was about women's issues, and women in sport, around the world. A day was also based on trade and the development of business links. Was that model successful and could it be replicated?

**Mary Allison:** It is important to have such opportunities for international discussions with people when they are an easy audience to capture. Some highly visible equalities activities were associated with the games, such as pride house and the para-sport programme. It was exciting for sport to have quite up-front debates about the strengths of sport and where it can grow and develop. There are legacies from that.

The European Gay and Lesbian Sport Federation will hold its convention in Glasgow next March. I am sure that that is partly because there was a really strong signal that that is welcome in Scotland and Glasgow.

Such things make a difference in sending a message that we want to advance those areas of sport and culture. There was a much broader debate than a debate on sport, but sport provided an opportunity and a platform.

**The Convener:** Have countries that maybe—let me put it diplomatically—have questionable human rights histories heard the message? I know that a lot of work was done with the Scottish Refugee Council, the campaign to welcome refugees, Amnesty International, Engender and Zero Tolerance, for example. There was close working with rights-based organisations. Were some of the messages that we sent out heard in parts of the world in which there is maybe a bit of intolerance?

**Mary Allison:** I would not be able to evidence whether the messages were or were not heard, but they were visible and were noted and commented on. That awareness raising is definitely a start.

The messages have led to other forms of engagement. We have a much closer relationship with equality-based organisations in Scotland as a consequence. We have an equalities committee with Engender, the Scottish Women's Convention, BEMIS and the Equality Network. That has been enhanced by a major sporting event that created a major signal about such things mattering in sport, and it has opened doors to organisations to genuinely feel that sport wants to have a dialogue.

The time is healthy for us to take the dialogue out beyond the one that we are having in Scotland and to consider how we can connect it to the international agenda that the committee is talking about, in which such equalities and rights are absolutely not part of the culture or the way in which countries are run. Sport can be a helpful tool to open that discussion.

**The Convener:** That takes us to Stuart Turner. EventScotland creates events and infrastructure and puts on the shows. Tell us your thoughts.

**Stuart Turner:** We work to a national events strategy that fits with the Government's economic strategy, the international framework and the cultural strategy. "Scotland The Perfect Stage" is the national events strategy, and we take one of the lead roles rather than the only lead role in delivering it. A lot of the agencies round the table take lead roles in delivering parts of the strategy, as well. It is very much a Scotland strategy, not an EventScotland strategy.

Specifically, we have an international programme of around 30 to 40 events a year, which can vary from big international events—we led for Scotland on the Ryder cup, for example—right down to relatively small international events. To pick a sporting event, Celtman is a 250-person extreme triathlon in the Torridon area.

**The Convener:** I have done that three times.

**Stuart Turner:** Have you?

**The Convener:** No. [*Laughter.*]

**Stuart Turner:** It is a truly international event. Only four or five of the 250 competitors are Scottish. The competitors all bring people with them, and the television pictures from the event go out around the world and sell Scotland to the world.

Our internationalisation has probably three components, each of which is complex. The first is international relations. We have to influence people who might want to bring events here or to



come to events here, so we need to have international connections with sports rights holders, cultural organisations and other countries that we can learn from. We have to talk to people.

Scotland house was mentioned. During the Commonwealth games, 27 international sports federations came to it. As members will know, there were only 17 sports in the Commonwealth games. We invited people to come and have a look at what was happening and what a good job we were doing as Scotland across all aspects. It is interesting that many of those people were very interested in the cultural programme and the Scotland house activity and in some ways were less interested in the sports activity, as they had seen that before. They knew how to do that bit.

The bit that really works about being part of VisitScotland is getting a profile and coverage. That is one of the key things that we do. Once we have fantastic events in Scotland, we need to ensure that they are projected internationally, whether through television coverage or online, and that we put out the right message around them that fits with what we want to say about Scotland.

The whole strategy is predicated on sweating our assets and what Scotland is good at and what we have—our people, our natural environment, our heritage and our culture. We need to sweat those internationally and tell people about them. We need to get the profile out there. A lot of what we might do with the home-grown events is help them to internationalise by getting that profile and working on international marketing and media.

The third strand is the people who come to the events. A lot of the events were not necessarily generated by bids to EventScotland; a lot of them have existed for a long time. For instance, the Edinburgh international festival brings in performers from all over the world. They have a fantastic experience here and take that back into the sector. That also happens across sports events. We had the mountain bike world cup at the weekend, which involved a lot of Scottish riders, but the vast majority were international and came from Europe, South America, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

International officials, judges and media people all come, and then there is the audience. We judge our events to be international if they attract at least 15 or 20 per cent—a significant percentage—of their audience from outside the UK. We also fish a lot in the rest of the UK market. We do not have the statistics back from the mountain bike world cup, but I would be surprised if less than 15 to 20 per cent of the 10,000 people who came to the event at the weekend came from outside the UK.

That projects an image of Scotland holding a really well-run event and being a capable country that does food, organisation and transport well. Those people's experience is important, in terms of what they say and think about Scotland and whether they are prepared to visit again. The international area is one in which we work all the time.

**The Convener:** Was the mountain bike world cup held at Nevis range, at Fort William, again?

**Stuart Turner:** Yes.

**The Convener:** So the backdrop is amazing.

**Stuart Turner:** Yes—it is absolutely amazing.

**The Convener:** Absolutely.

I take it that that is the Commonwealth tartan tie that you are wearing?

**Stuart Turner:** It is, yes.

**Jamie McGrigor:** I am interested in hearing from the groups that have done tours lately, such as the Scottish Dance Theatre and the National Theatre of Scotland, particularly regarding how contemporary and cutting-edge modern dance intermingles with the more traditional dances and cultures of, say, India and China. More generally, what are the barriers to your organisations? Are there political barriers?

**Liam Sinclair:** In the tour that we just did, we had lots of opportunities to explore those connections in the reactions to the presentation of the works—our work is contemporary dance. The audience were members of the public and people who came from a range of groups that might be engaged in more classical forms of Indian dance. Around that, we created as many opportunities as we could for discussion and debate. That was where the really fascinating points of the tour took place. People who were trained in strict classical Indian forms had the opportunity to ask how to get to that expressive place where things in the dancer's body and expressions come from instinct, rather than think that it must be done in a certain way, and only when someone can do it like that can they explore other forms. That is a concise way of explaining some of the traditions of Indian classical dance. That exchange was the fascinating point. There were a lot of opportunities to explore that, including workshops with school groups and professionals.

There is a real issue regarding political barriers. In China all our work has to pass through a censorship process. One work that we toured, "Winter, Again", used fake blood quite repeatedly. Nearly all of that had to be cut from the piece for it to be allowed to be presented in China. Another work that we had started to discuss touring with the promoter, a piece called "Yama", was ruled out

completely, for reasons that we have never fully understood. Sometimes, the reasons for the censorship can be clearly understood, but less so other times.

We have to navigate the political challenges in order to create moments of engagement. Although “Winter, Again” was not presented in the way that we would present it here, it was still fascinating to understand the reactions to that piece of work when audiences got a chance to engage with it.

10:00

**Neil Murray:** We have had quite a lot of experience of working in China and with China. Each time has been different. The first time, we took David Greig’s play for young people, “The Monster in the Hall”, to tour China. We had a real issue with that, as one of the characters in the show is clearly gay, or is defined as being gay. The authorities in China had a real issue with our presenting that to a young audience.

We said, “If you surtitle the show, it is your prerogative how you do that. We can’t necessarily tell you how to do that.” We have an associate director who is Chinese, who works for us and who is brilliant. I sat with her and asked her to tell me every time the authorities changed a word from what we were saying. There were quite a few instances. However, we held our ground regarding what we said, and we did the text as it was written. When the translation was changed, it was clear that the audience knew, and they just laughed. They were thinking, “He’s not saying that—that’s not what that word is.” In a sense, that almost shows the weakness of censorship. It overrode it, in fact—because the authorities tried to censor the text, there was more of an issue. That is the only time when we have had direct intervention.

We have just toured David Greig’s play “Dunsinane”, which is his contemporary follow-up to “Macbeth”. The Chinese loved it, because it is fiercely political. The show is really about Iraq and Afghanistan—although it is about Scotland and England, too. We played it in Taiwan as well as in mainland China. The Taiwanese saw themselves as the Scots, with the English as the Chinese. The Chinese saw it the other way round. There are all those resonances that we never quite realise are going to be there. We also toured “Dunsinane” to Russia, just when the Russia-Ukraine situation was kicking off and when the sense of a large country trying to deal with a smaller neighbour was really prevalent.

To return to what Liam Sinclair was saying, there is a sense not just of taking work elsewhere but of working and collaborating. We have a show called “Dragon”, which is a co-production with the Tianjin children’s arts theatre company from

China. That is playing in the Edinburgh international festival this year—there are some good seats still available. We use Chinese artists in that show, and it has been really fantastic. Two of the performers and the associate director are Chinese. The issues become more about how much we pay. We were paying them much more than what they would earn in China. It becomes a matter of logistics. What they bring creatively to the project is extraordinary. They transformed the project for us.

Each time we tour, it is different. As Liam Sinclair said, there are huge challenges, but it is incredibly invigorating. We learn more about our shows as well, and we come back with a different sense of what the show is. What we often think of as being local is in fact hugely international. For us, “Black Watch” is probably the best example of that. It is a show about a very small group of people from a certain part of Scotland that translates everywhere.

**Janet Archer:** From what I understand, the Scottish Government is working closely with the British Council in China to open up opportunities for touring and co-production. I think that I am right in saying that between 300 and 400 new venues in China have been built in the past 12 months alone, and China is actively considering how it can populate those venues with content. There is real opportunity for Scotland to work closely with China to get our companies and artists out there, right across China.

**Dr Anderson:** On the example of “Dunsinane” in Russia, I mentioned that there were seasons or years of cultural exchange. That tour had been programmed before the Ukraine crisis. Following what happened in Ukraine, tough decisions had to be made whether to carry on with that cultural year. It is good that we did, because it kept doors open. “Dunsinane” was a hit in Moscow. It was an important channel to keep open, despite the conflict that we had at the political level between the countries.

Liam Sinclair made a point about big events, overseas tours and projects. Getting artistic exchange or collaboration and skills transfer to happen on the back of those is important. We use the cultural offerings to build international relations. The longer-term relationship and trust that are built on the back of such tours matters a lot.

Another issue is where to do things. There are lots of countries in the world, and a lot of stuff could be done everywhere. Therefore, the issue is about how to concentrate resources. The Scottish Government has published its international framework, which concentrates on the Scottish diaspora, Europe, a few emerging economies and

a couple of developing countries. Deciding where to concentrate effort matters.

We have a strategic partnership with Creative Scotland. For the past three years, we have been concentrating effort on Brazil, India and South Africa. The result of that has been a lot of artistic exchange, as well as new ideas, particularly in relation to Brazil.

**Neil Murray:** We have an ethical policy. The problem is that countries can quickly change their ethics. When we fix up something, our hands are absolutely clean, but when it comes to doing the show, we might have quite a big question mark over whether we should do it. We genuinely look at the issue case by case.

The British Council's help, particularly in Russia, was enormous. It was determined that we should come and do the show, because it says something about the situation. When we were in China, we had massive help from British Council and Scottish Government officials. They have helped to steer us through the more tricky protocols, particularly in China. The need to get the connections right before we go out there is a huge issue for us.

**Jamie McGrigor:** While we are on the question of ethics, I have another topic to raise. How does Scottish Student Sport get over to its members the revulsion—felt especially by young footballers—at what appears to be a culture of corruption in FIFA?

**The Convener:** How topical.

**Stew Fowlie:** Yes, it is hot off the press. I think that everyone would join in that revulsion at what happens in football at a global level. In truth, however, it is distant from almost everyone who plays football to the point that it is not particularly an issue on the ground.

A marvellous thing about sport, particularly student sport, is the melting pot to which I have referred. It is normal for everyone to run along together with different nationalities, and we have a strong approach to some of the minority issues that Mary Allison mentioned. People just respond to the environment in which they find themselves, which, I hope, is very different from the one that people might experience at FIFA.

A more technical response to your question is that our principal job is to take the good guidance that we get from sportscotland and the national governing bodies of sport and translate that for a student audience. You would find, I hope, that the Scottish Football Association takes a much stronger line on those issues than its international counterparts may take.

**Stuart Turner:** We work with the international federations quite a lot, and we worked more with

the Union of European Football Associations than with FIFA on the bids for the Euro 2020 matches.

Undoubtedly, all sorts of things happen all the time. The approach to sport is quite different from the approach to culture in that, in theory, sport is very process driven and is structured internationally. There is a clear path for how organisations are supposed to do things. Some of the international federations stick rigorously to that and some of them do not. Some of them change the rules as they go along for perfectly valid reasons, and some of them change the rules to suit their own interests.

Take the International Rugby Board's decision to remove Scotland from the sevens world series calendar, for example. On balance, we can probably see why it would do that—it is to do with Olympic territory, broadcast territories and so on. However, the process was completely and utterly flawed because the IRB did not say what any of the criteria on which it was judging the issue were. It made a bad decision on the basis of its own process and its own criteria.

Part of what we need to do through international influence is know the governing bodies well. We want them to trust us, but we need to know whether they are people that we can trust. We have good relationships with some of the international federations; with others, it becomes more tricky—people move and then we have to get to know a whole load of new people. It really helps when we have Scottish and British people on those governing bodies, and UK Sport has a programme of international influence that tries to get people into those organisations.

We have a couple of Scots in key roles in international sports federations, who got there by their own efforts, and they are looking at Scotland's international influence. Whether or not it happened in every sport, having three, four, five or six people in key positions in world sport would really help us internationally, because those people would have influence over other sports bodies. That would help us to tackle corruption, as we could have a positive influence from a moral point of view.

By comparison, the cultural side is much more organic and we can choose the approach that we take. If there is somebody that we do not want to work with, there are plenty of other people that we can work with. The two fields are very different when it comes to how we do something, although what we are trying to do might be similar.

**The Convener:** Jamie, did you want to come back in?

**Jamie McGrigor:** No. What I was trying to get at—I think that it is being covered, in fact—is that there is an ethos of sportsmanship and honesty in

grassroots sport, with children and students being brought up to think that way, but they then have that whole horizon shattered by what they see as a culture of corruption that appears to have been running for a long time, not only in football but at the head of other sports, too. Money from our organisations, which could be used to help grassroots sport, is being used for the wrong reasons. I feel very strongly about the situation. How do you explain it to a young person?

**Mary Allison:** I think that Stuart Turner has covered that, in large part. We could possibly make more of the good governance of sport that we have in Scotland. Part of our investment process is having a strong ethical, anti-corruption and anti-betting approach and compliance with doping legislation. We will not invest in a sport's governing body unless we are absolutely solid about the governance of that sport.

As Stuart pointed out, there is a lot of merit in those individuals who have been through the processes of modernising their sports and developing strong ethical policies being able to share and showcase that work with the rest of the world, especially when they are trying to develop sports in cultures in which, potentially, some of the practices that have been mentioned are just how business is done.

We have a lot to offer in supporting other countries to do business in sport better. There is a lot that we can export, but we have not been able to do that to the extent that we could have done had we had more Scottish voices on some of the international bodies and better international relationships at a grassroots level and from a sports development perspective.

We have strong international connections in relation to the way in which events are managed and represented, but in terms of grass-roots sports developments—how people can build, grow and govern clubs—there is a lot that Scotland could showcase.

**Jamie McGrigor:** It is important to transfer that Scottish culture of fairness and sportsmanship to the rest of the world.

**Mary Allison:** Yes, there is a lot that we could support.

10:15

**Anne McTaggart:** Dr Anderson and Stuart Turner have touched on these issues, but I want to go back to the Scottish Government's international framework and engagement. How do you work with the Scottish Government to deliver the international engagement priorities? How much of a priority is that for your organisation?

**Dr Anderson:** We have regular dialogue with the Scottish Government. In the production of the country plans—at the moment, the plans for India and Pakistan are being refreshed and there is one for the Americas—we have consulted with the Government quite closely on what is happening in those countries, what links there are and what we are trying to promote. There is a constant dialogue with the Scottish Government about prioritisation and the content of the country plans.

If you think of it as a Venn diagram, we look for the overlapping bit. The British Council's priorities are the emerging economies, fragile states and developing countries, while the Scottish Government is looking at the diaspora, Europe and the emerging economies, so the bit that overlaps is more about the emerging economies than the other parts. We both recognise that and we talk about an alignment of purpose in those countries where there is a commonality of interests. For example, the large growing economies—Brazil, Russia, India, China, Mexico and so on—are a common interest.

We have an advisory committee, and the Scottish Government has a seat on that. There is constant dialogue about what is happening, where it is happening and where we need to concentrate effort.

**Neil Murray:** The National Theatre of Scotland is funded directly by the Scottish Government, so we have a lot of dialogue particularly with David Sears and his colleagues, who are incredibly helpful and supportive. Our key priority is that any partnership must be driven artistically; you cannot put a square peg in a round hole and you cannot make a partnership work if the match is not there. The driving force for us is always the show that we are working on, whether that is a co-production with an international company or us taking our work out.

We take cognisance of where the priority countries are, and we have visited Brazil, Russia and China in the past few years. North America is also a big partner. We are trying to shift our gaze a bit more to Europe, which coincides with a slight shift in the Government's priority countries.

It is surprisingly hard for English-language theatre to play in mainland Europe, because Europeans are brilliant at translating things quickly. As soon as a good Scottish play is performed, they will translate it into their own tongue—the agent will sell the rights. Even worse, they will stage the play brilliantly in English, which is completely galling. It is infuriating but brilliant on their part. We have worked in Poland and Russia already, and we are now starting to look at Germany and France as well.

We are aware of where the Government's key partnerships are, but pressure is never applied on us to take work to those places—we try to align where we can. I hope that David Sears would agree—he has been brilliant at saying it—that the art is what drives the partnership in the first instance.

**Liam Sinclair:** Our core funding relationship is directly with Creative Scotland—we are a regularly funded organisation. However, we have a close relationship with colleagues in Government on international work, and that manifests itself in lots of different ways. When we came back from India, the Government was refreshing the India plan and we were able to feed in our experiences directly to the consultation on that. We are also in the final stages of pulling together a tour of Mexico as part of the British Council's themed year.

Connections weave together in interesting ways. The tour is part of the themed year and we are getting British Council support through a foundation in Mexico, but the piece that we will be touring is a made in Scotland piece and we have secured some made in Scotland onward touring funding, which is supported through the Edinburgh festivals expo fund for work presented at the Edinburgh festival fringe. Often, strands of activity are woven together.

I agree with Neil Murray that there must be an artistic premise to what people are doing. With the Mexico tour in the autumn, we are exploring touring existing work but we are also using the tour as an opportunity to explore potential future co-production. In Mexico City, we are working with a well-established and respected classical musical ensemble, CEPRO Music, to explore producing a piece together—it would bring the live music element and we would bring the dance element.

**The Convener:** I think that the committee should investigate that piece of work in Mexico. [*Laughter.*] I think that we have to experience it.

**Janet Archer:** Creative Scotland was fully engaged in the development of the Scottish Government's revised and refreshed international framework. We published our 10-year plan last year, and the fifth of our five ambitions in it is centred on international work. It is:

"Scotland is a distinctive creative nation connected to the world."

An ambition in the Scottish Government's framework is:

"Our economic, educational, cultural and heritage strengths are celebrated and globally recognised, supporting our positive international reputation."

There is a direct correlation between those statements.

Through that framework, a focus on innovation and knowledge exchange is developing that fits well with the international strategy that we are developing. It also fits well with our new relationship with the Scottish Further and Higher Education Funding Council, in which we are thinking about the creative industries, innovation hubs and what those things might mean in a Scotland context. I think that more will come through in that space that joins up neatly with the approach that is being driven through the international framework.

**The Convener:** Does that answer your question, Anne?

**Anne McTaggart:** Yes, thank you.

**Adam Ingram:** I return to the question that Jamie McGrigor posed at the outset about barriers that your organisations face in your international engagement and the effectiveness of that engagement. Can you distil that and give us one example of the key barriers that you are facing?

Secondly, I am amazed that, so far, nobody has focused on funding for these activities. How well funded are they? Where do the funds come from? Are you totally dependent on the public sector? How well have you engaged with Scottish companies on the funding of international engagement? There are some rich companies out there with very Scottish products. I am thinking of whisky and the like. How well are you doing in attracting funding from the private sector?

**Stuart Turner:** I will start with the question about barriers. I have already alluded to one of the key points in relation to the cultural sector. When we are looking at bringing in events and supporting events to push their messages out, the channels are less well defined in the cultural sector. It would be really good from an events perspective—I know that we do some of this work—to create some of those channels from a Scottish perspective. An example would be something that has happened around the Edinburgh festivals before—an international summit of culture ministers. We need to look at how we can create such channels. I know that some of that has happened previously, and we have done it in relation to individual genres, but the process is less structured and more organic. That would be my observation; others may have different views.

My next point might be in danger of being political, but it is just an observation. On sport, the other barrier is that, when we bid for international sports events, for the majority of sports we have to go through a British or a UK governing body. That is not necessarily a problem—we have good relationships with those bodies—but they have a remit for the whole of the UK, and they might

choose to put an event in Wales, London or elsewhere, rather than Scotland. The access to the international market in sport is very structured. Scottish Cycling cannot bid for an international event; British Cycling must do it.

That can be a barrier. We work hard on relationship management to prevent it from becoming one—we work extremely closely with the British federations—but, undoubtedly, it means that we have to eat just our share of the cake rather than getting the whole cake.

On the issue of funding, the question is: how long is a piece of string? From our perspective, we supply about 20 to 25 per cent of the funding of the events that we support. There are always other funders. Sometimes, those funders will be other public sector agencies, such as Creative Scotland or local authorities, but across the piece the commercial income and private sector income is usually more than 50 per cent of the income into events.

I will take last weekend's mountain bike world cup as an example, as it is a current event. About 70 per cent of its income is commercial income from the private sector—sponsors and ticket sales. Given the benefits that it brings to Scotland, I think that that is a pretty good mix.

Although I would not say in any way that we do not need more money, any funding that we would need would probably be in relation to specific projects and big events rather than the on-going portfolio.

**The Convener:** Hanzala Malik has a quick supplementary question.

**Hanzala Malik:** This question is also for Creative Scotland. How many cities do you engage with around the world that have twinning arrangements with Scotland? Glasgow's twin city in Germany, Nuremberg, holds a Burns supper every year. The event is always sold out, and it attracts a lot of private money. Are similar events held in other twinned cities? Would you be interested in developing them? Burns suppers clearly promote Scotland, as they are a very specific event. We send haggis to Nuremberg every year. Would you be interested in promoting that in other cities? Will you speak to Scottish cities about their twinned partners?

**Janet Archer:** We are interested in such activities, and we have partnerships with cities and towns in Scotland. Creative Scotland has partnerships with all the 32 local authorities in Scotland. Through those, we would have conversations with twin cities and other places in other parts of the world.

We have had a formal arrangement around the memorandum of understanding with the British

Council with regard to the way that we have worked internationally, but since I began my role at Creative Scotland I have been keen to ensure that we think hard about what else we might do internationally. We have committed to producing an international strategy this year that will line up with the Scottish Government's international approach. Clearly, within that, we need to think about what we can do to connect people from Scotland with people elsewhere in an even more meaningful way.

I attended the Chinese Burns night in Edinburgh. I acknowledge that it was here and not abroad, which is what you were asking about, but it was a fantastic example of the way in which Scotland works in an integrated way with people from China. There are lots of opportunities through those kinds of initiatives.

**Hanzala Malik:** Would you be able to give us any details of what you are proposing to do, or are you still at the stage of negotiations and talks?

**Janet Archer:** We are still in the process. Creative Scotland's role is as a funder and a development agency. It is important that we work through and with the organisations and places that we fund. We want to hold conversations with 32 local authorities across Scotland about who they might want to connect with, and also pull together the knowledge that we as an organisation hold about where the opportunities are.

10:30

**Stuart Turner:** Our relationships probably exist at two separate levels. The level that you are talking about, Mr Malik, is almost event specific. A lot of events have such a connection, and we would advise, help and, if we could, facilitate that.

There are also relationships that we have as an organisation. We have a formal MOU with the New Zealand Government on exchanging events and best practice. We even had a staff exchange. We have less formal agreements with Denmark, Finland and the state of Victoria in Australia. We exchange intelligence on events, measurement and various other things, particularly when we are not direct competitors.

Some things therefore exist at our level with direct relationships; others are more appropriate for the events themselves, when our role is more one of facilitation.

**Dr Anderson:** Let me return to Mr Ingram's question. I guess the British Council in country is there to reduce barriers, so for the National Theatre of Scotland, or whoever, we try to make life easier and to help. The barrier for us is the amount of money that we have to enable more activity to take place.

One barrier the other way is about visas. Last week—this was in the *Financial Times* or *The Daily Telegraph*—there was a story about a Georgian theatre company that was invited to the Manchester festival. It could not come because its members were all refused visas since they did not have the financial means to independently support themselves, and that is a problem.

Language can be another barrier. We have more evidence that students tend to go either somewhere where English is spoken—America, Canada or Australia—or somewhere close, which means Europe. It is difficult to get people to go to the far east or parts of east Asia and so on.

Language and visas are barriers, but for us the main barrier is probably money. Our budget is about £800 million a year, of which about 20 per cent is a grant from the Foreign Office. The rest is earned through teaching English, running exams, or managing contracts for others. The grant in aid from the Foreign Office is now a pretty small portion of the total.

**Neil Murray:** For us the barriers tend to be about scheduling. Sometimes an offer will come quickly and simply cannot be accommodated—often it is a timing issue.

There is also an issue of resource. We cannot take up all the offers that we would like. It is not necessarily a financial resource; it is more about staffing. If we have a big show in Scotland, that is where we deploy our key people, rather than suddenly pulling them out to be in the USA or China. We have access to a large pool of freelancers, but we still need our key people. If a show is internationally a key priority for us, we want the best people working on that.

Funding is an issue, although not necessarily our own funding. Our policy tends to be that we are the National Theatre of Scotland and we try to concentrate our funds on creating work in Scotland. If our work travels, we try to make it self-supporting. That is usually done through fees that we raise from the festivals or theatres that we visit. We receive some help from the Scottish Government international touring fund, which is a fund for the five national companies of £350,000 a year. It tries to distribute the money equally, but we always try to get the lion's share—sometimes we do; sometimes we do not. It depends on how much we have out and, as Lloyd Anderson said, the question is often whether the British Council in that country is helping the partner that we are going to visit.

The big thing that often prevents shows is not the weekly fee for the actors. A project such as the James plays, which we did in Edinburgh and are planning to tour internationally in 2016, is a huge undertaking. It involves having more than 40

people on the road, which means 40 flights and 40 hotel rooms a night. In a sense, that is a bigger issue than the fees for the actors. We do not even see the money: it is what we call an under-the-line matter for the partners to deal with. We say, "We need really good hotels for 40 people, thank you very much" or "Flights for 40 people, please". That is one barrier that exists.

With regard to trying to raise money ourselves to help our partnerships, we have in the USA what is called a 501(c)(3) board—National Theatre of Scotland America Inc—which means that we can raise sponsorship and accept fees without tax in the USA. Initially, we did that as a functionary thing to help us to get there and so that our fees were not penalised. As we have done more and more work—to go back to the point about consistency that we started with—we have built up a network of key supporters in the USA. On the board we have somebody from a major whisky company and someone from a finance company with an American name.

In America there is an expression for those on theatre boards: give, get or get off. You are meant to give money, you get money or you get off the board. It is a very different way of operating; the subsidy issue does not exist for boards in the USA. It is a change of culture for us to be working with an American board, where there is an expectation on the members to raise money. We are starting slowly but we are building it up, and I think that it will be a key aspect of future international work for us.

Finally, on the point about Burns suppers and so on, it is interesting that, wherever we go in the world, no matter how contemporary and cutting-edge we think our show is, people always want us to do a Burns supper. We have done them in fantastic places. We have a show called, "The Strange Undoing of Prudencia Hart", which we perform in a pub. We did the show in Santa Monica, and on the Saturday night, which coincided with Burns night, they said, "Can you not do the show, and do a Burns supper instead?" So we did a Burns supper in 80-degree temperatures in Santa Monica in January. We are always looking for opportunities to do that. [*Laughter.*]

**Stew Fowlie:** I will echo one of the previous comments and then make a slightly different point. I want to underline what Stuart Turner said about the Scottish-versus-British element, which is quite important, certainly within sport. That raises questions about whether we are trying to influence Britain first before we go wider than that.

Besides that, the main barrier is co-ordination. Sitting as we do between education and sport, we know that, if we are going to have an impact in this arena, we need to align with a lot of different sets of priorities. We need to know what the steer is

from the Scottish Government and how that plays out through the funding council, and where sportscotland might fit in. We also need to recognise that each of our member institutions will have its own priorities around recruitment of students, for example, and international bits of research.

That is potentially quite complex, but the good news is that, if we can make sense of it and if all the stars align, we are in a uniquely useful place to do the sort of meaningful work that has often not been done yet. That is an exciting opportunity.

I suppose my question, or my challenge, is whether, outwith a discussion such as this one, we have the right mechanism to bring sport, culture and education together so that we can collaborate to best effect. Does that mechanism exist? Others may be able to answer that better than I can. Do we want such a mechanism, if one does not yet exist?

**Janet Archer:** I echo that, and I fully endorse the suggestion that there could be better co-ordination and better shared access to knowledge and networks than we are currently initiating. Perhaps it is up to us, as national agencies, to take the lead in generating closer working.

On the issue of barriers, I would make two points. One is around digital. A lot of arts organisations and creative industries companies are now exploiting digital in a meaningful way by opening up to international opportunities and markets. However, the infrastructure in Scotland is still not strong enough to accommodate that, particularly given the large file sizes for film or music and the fact that it is common practice now for creative people in many different parts of the world to work together on a digital platform and collaborate. We are not quite able to do that everywhere in Scotland just yet, so we need to work on the infrastructure.

Digital is increasingly important for Creative Scotland. Our website has about 150,000 visitors a month, which is a significant number of people. For our Twitter usage, we have about 60,000 followers, and we think about 20,000 of them are international people. We have real opportunities to build on there.

The point on funding that I would make is that we are stretched. You would expect me to say that, but there is a specific point about the way in which we are funded as an organisation. A significant proportion of our funding comes from the national lottery and we are constrained in what we can use it for, given that it must benefit the people of Scotland. It is therefore quite difficult to deploy that funding for international working. We do not have a lot of spare resource to be able to

support the development that could happen for Scotland internationally.

My experience of working not just in Scotland but beyond is that a little more resource going into international working can unlock a great deal. The fee levels that companies get internationally—I am sure that colleagues will back me up on this—are often higher than those that can be brought in through UK working. There is therefore added value in any little bit of extra money that goes into international working, which could play a significant role in overall economic gain.

**The Convener:** Does that answer your questions, Adam?

**Adam Ingram:** Yes. There is certainly a range of issues there that we might wish to explore.

**The Convener:** Rod Campbell wants to explore some other issues.

**Roderick Campbell:** In fact, convener, my questions were largely on budget issues and they have largely been answered. However, I have a particular question for the people who are here today. Is there a conflict at times between domestic engagement and international engagement? If so, how are such conflicts resolved?

**Stuart Turner:** From an events perspective—which is the perspective that I am speaking from—the two are symbiotic. If an event does not have Scottish people at it enjoying it and if there are no Scottish suppliers or Scottish food and drink, because that part of it has not been developed, the quality of experience for any visitors and the quality of any broadcast that goes out are lessened. Part of our job is to ensure that we work with smaller events and help them to grow and develop, but we work with the industry to ensure that the quality is there so that when we project outwards or bring people inwards, the two things meet in the middle and people have the experience that we want them to have.

Events are very much about people's experience; they go to an event because they want the experience, which has to be quality. As far as we are concerned, we have to have domestic engagement and international engagement, so I do not think that there is a conflict. Of course, it always comes back to resourcing and where we cut the cake. However, within the resources available, we must develop both sides, which work virtuously to help each other.

**Janet Archer:** International engagement and domestic engagement are sometimes one and the same thing. For example, the Edinburgh international festival and all the other festivals that take place in Edinburgh and beyond bring fantastic



international work to Scotland for Scottish audiences and impact significantly on the economy here. Other examples that fit into that theme include the St Magnus festival in Orkney, which is a terrific international exposition, and the work that organisations such as Cryptic, which works internationally as a producing art house, do in Glasgow.

**Neil Murray:** The question of where we spend our time and resource is a really good one, especially for organisations that produce work. When we first started, we were slightly taken aback by the international interest in our work. We got a bit giddy about it and thought, “Well, it’s all very well being in Sydney, but we really need to be in Sutherland this week,” or whatever. People started to notice and to say things like, “How come you’re in New York but not in Kirkcaldy?” That was a really good early lesson for us.

In our third year, we simply said that we would not tour internationally, because it was pulling on too much of our resource. We have slightly calmed down now, and we have got the balance right in what we see international work doing for our reputation, our finances and the experience that it gives our teams. When they come back from such work, they are very much match fit, I suppose, in terms of what we do.

When it comes to making international touring work, where the funding comes from is a bit of a jigsaw puzzle. We have had support from Creative Scotland’s made in Scotland fund for some of our shows. To pick up on Janet Archer’s point, if we can get that jigsaw puzzle right, Scotland will benefit. If the fees are right, that makes it possible to remount a show, which it certainly would not have been possible to do just in Scotland. When we do the James plays—I should not be saying this, because nothing has been announced yet, but never mind—

10:45

**Anne McTaggart:** It has now.

**The Convener:** We will not tell anyone.

**Neil Murray:** Will you turn that television off?

Doing shows internationally enables us to do them in Scotland again—one feeds the other. That is key for us—the two things work symbiotically, I hope. It is about a balance.

The point is a good one, because there can be a temptation to think about how exciting international work is, when what we need to think about is whose money is paying for this. It is the Scottish taxpayer’s money, and that is where the work should be focused. However, the spin-off is fantastic, and the hope is that it feeds back into Scotland.

**Willie Coffey:** I will start by picking up on Janet Archer’s point. How to get a consistent approach in Europe on the digital agenda to increase not just jobs but opportunities throughout the European Union is quite often raised as a topic at the committee. There must be issues for cultural organisations in that regard, particularly when they are touring. I suppose that shows are about not just people and props these days, but multimedia and many other facets. The committee is very much aware of the importance of the digital agenda for a number of areas.

I wanted to say a wee word about the Burns supper, which has been mentioned several times. I am sure that you know that you do not have to wait until January to have a Burns supper. Some of my associates had a Burns supper in July—it was 29 years ago—to celebrate what you will all know as the Kilmarnock edition of Burns, which was published in 1786. It is lovely to hear that there is such wide interest in Robert Burns.

**The Convener:** Mr Coffey does not have a vested interest in saying any of that.

**Willie Coffey:** It would be lovely to hear more stories about the whole Robert Burns experience being taken across the world not just in January, because such activity is for the whole year.

My main question is about how our friends, particularly those in the cultural organisations, engage with the European institutions, if they do so at all. If we look at the European Commission’s 10-point plan for renewal, culture is not in there at all; it does not feature. Sport is not mentioned, either. Culture should be up front and centre stage. Do you get an opportunity to influence colleagues and the political dimension in Europe or is that beyond your abilities? If you do get an opportunity to do that, how could you do it better?

**Dr Anderson:** The Commission’s culture budget has always been small, because of the principle of subsidiarity. It was always seen to be an area that had to be devolved to the national level.

There is a creative Europe desk, which Janet Archer houses in Creative Scotland.

**Janet Archer:** Yes, that is right. Creative Europe has allocated just under €2 billion between 2014 and 2020. It is clear that Scotland is not getting its fair share of that. We have staff who are part of the UK-wide creative Europe desk to look at providing advice, guidance and support to Scottish organisations to help them to get those funds.

Creative Scotland is also part of a number of networks across Europe and globally. We belong to the International Federation of Arts Councils and Culture Agencies, which is the association

that brings arts councils together, the International Society for the Performing Arts and the International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts, which is a European network. We have two members of staff who are presidents of European networks in the field of education: Joan Parr liaises with educational policymakers and strategists across Europe, and Ian Smith—who is our head of music—is also the president of a European-wide organisation.

**Liam Sinclair:** We have just come to the end of a project called RepNet, which linked together a series of repertory dance companies throughout Europe with the explicit aims of exchanging ideas about practice and understanding future potential. We found it incredibly valuable.

We did not raise the funds here—it was that European model whereby funding was raised in another country and Scotland was one of the partnership countries. It worked at all levels of the company: it was not just about the artistic directors and executive staff exchanging ideas; the technical directors or managers exchanged ideas on method, marketing and exploring.

In the area of contemporary dance, there is a well-established touring network throughout the main houses in Europe, but there is perhaps less opportunity to engage in some of the really interesting exchange that those same companies that tour that circuit have found when they go to the developing countries or economies. The rationale behind the project came from asking how we could come together and use that as a force for cracking things open a bit more, to get away from the “drop into Paris one night, do a show, move on to Berlin” routine.

Returning to the point about resource and the conflict between national and international work, there is an issue with schedules. They never neatly overlap; we always have to re-juggle. What we have learned, and are still learning, is that we get better at the juggling the more we understand about the way that the culture works. Better understanding of the culture is to do with long-term planning horizons and long-term engagement.

The plea, if there is ever additional resource, would be for investment to facilitate long-term relationship building and planning. That will add value tenfold. The deeper the understanding, the deeper you can go to resolve the issues—they are not conflicts; they relate to the way that things do not neatly stack together at the first pass.

**Mary Allison:** It has been an interesting situation in sport, because our connections in Europe have largely been through health policy rather than cultural policy. We have had a lot of opportunity to engage with and influence the health and food safety directorate-general.

A lot of that activity has been about harmonising public health messages about minimum levels of physical activity, the importance of activity to health and the role of sport within that. As part of the health overview, a view has been taken on anti-doping, the relationship between European policy and WADA—the World Anti-Doping Agency—and some of the sense checking of governance of those issues.

Does that always work? It worked well recently, because the UK representative, unusually, was from Scotland and was able to liaise. The challenges come when we are given the opportunity to present a UK perspective, but the matter has been devolved within the UK. The Sport England perspective may be quite different from the sportscotland perspective, because of different policy environments around health or sport. That sometimes presents us with some challenges in coming to a coherent view that we can feed into the EU mechanism. As Stuart Turner said, a lot of work has been done with international federations in sport, and between the four home countries of the UK, to come to agreed positions that we can put into the mix.

There are slightly different policy takes. A lot of the European policy has been quite concerned with ageing, the demographics of ageing and the impact that that has on physical activity, health and sport, and access. In the UK, we tend to have quite a strong focus on young people, opportunities and equality.

**Willie Coffey:** I am interested to hear about your counterparts in Europe, particularly on the cultural side, and whether they have more proactive or direct engagement with the institutions of Europe. Are they more able to get in there and get, if not a seat at the table, access to funding streams and be represented in something such as the commission's 10-point plan for Europe? I do not understand why that agenda is not there, up front and in your face. It is not, and it should be.

It is difficult to engage with European institutions—we find that, too. What is your take on that? Do your counterparts across Europe get involved in such engagement?

**Neil Murray:** I was fortunate to be part of the Edinburgh international culture summit, which took place in this building last August. Why culture is not part of what is, in effect, the main charter of the EU—or, indeed, of the United Nations—was one of the issues that came up. One of the recommendations from that summit was to drive that priority forward. I undertake to find out where that has got to.

Our experience with European streams of funding is that they are incredibly complex. There

used to be a scheme called the kaleidoscope fund that was probably the most complicated funding stream ever. An application took months and it was necessary to have three partners from three different countries. It almost felt as if the complexity was there to put people off applying, and it did stop people applying. There is a different scheme now, which is a little simpler, but it is still very complicated. We engaged with it once with a company from Germany and one from Canada and we were not successful, but we will continue to look at it.

Going back to Mary Allison's point, one of the issues that came out at that culture summit was the linking of culture and health, both physical and mental, given that culture can be a massive asset in addressing some health problems.

I share your concern that culture is not higher up the agenda. I will try to find out from colleagues who were at the culture summit whether the situation has moved forward.

**The Convener:** That would be helpful. We will have the Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Europe and External Affairs before us, so we can perhaps ask some of those questions, but hearing from the sector is very important.

We are just about out of time, but Jamie McGrigor is very keen to ask a last supplementary question.

**Jamie McGrigor:** Thank you. I agree with Willie Coffey's sentiments about the difficulties of engaging with European institutions. Janet Archer mentioned funding of €2 billion, which may be available through Creative Europe. What should Scotland's share of that be?

**Janet Archer:** The fund is driven by applications from organisations based across Europe, so it is not divided up by country specifically. The funding is for cultural and creative sectors, and there is also a media sub-programme that invests in film, television, new media and games, so it is quite wide ranging.

The application process is partnership driven, so individual companies would not apply. An application would be made with partners from across Europe, so it is difficult to say what Scotland's share should be. We have calculated roughly what we are getting relative to our demographic compared with other UK countries, and the figure is disproportionately low at the moment. Therefore, there is an opportunity to find ways of enabling partnerships to be made so that Scotland can generate confidence. Perhaps we need to do some workshops and training to help people to be able to make applications that might be successful, so that we can punch through a bit more powerfully in that programme. We are talking

about a fund of just under €2 billion, so it is a significant amount of money to play for.

**The Convener:** At our final meeting before the recess, we will take evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Infrastructure, Investment and Cities on European structural funds, which we have kept a close eye on. We know that when it comes to research and innovation in science, we punch above our weight on some indicators as far as securing funding is concerned. Perhaps you should have a chat with some of our science and innovation people, who seem to know how to navigate the system.

**Janet Archer:** As Neil Murray said, it is complex. The forms can be cumbersome and laborious to fill in, so we need to think about how we can use our collective resource in the most effective way to support the efforts of organisations whose focus should be on making great work. We need to think collectively about how to draw in European resource in a better way than we do currently.

**The Convener:** The committee is familiar with a number of organisations that do exactly that for the education sector and other sectors, such as the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations and the West of Scotland Colleges Partnership. They do that kind of work, so there is a model there. As a holder of an ESF grant for a project many years ago, I feel your pain.

That concludes the evidence from our guests around the table. We are really grateful for the very interesting and creative ways in which you have helped us to understand how your sectors communicate with the rest of the world, what that brings us and what we can give back. We are really grateful for your written and oral evidence, and if there is anything else that you think would help us in our understanding of this area, please keep in touch and let us know what is happening. If a visit to Mexico is a goer—that is only a joke; invariably, we do such things via videoconference.

I thank our witnesses very much. I briefly suspend the meeting to allow them to leave their seats.

11:00

*Meeting suspended.*

11:02

*On resuming—***“Brussels Bulletin”****The Convener:** Welcome back to the meeting.

Agenda item 3 is the “Brussels Bulletin”. Copies of the bulletin are in members’ papers. Are there any questions or clarifications?

**Roderick Campbell:** Obviously, things have moved on in relation to the transatlantic trade and investment partnership. I am not quite sure why the plenary session did not take place, although I heard that there was a huge number of amendments. TTIP is therefore work in progress.

**The Convener:** I believe that that session has been postponed until September.

**Willie Coffey:** I refer to the health and sport item on the second last page of the bulletin. Members will notice that the European Commission decided not to update the alcohol strategy, which led to 20 organisations resigning from the European Union alcohol and health forum. I would like to find out a wee bit more about what happened there. It sounds as if something fairly serious has happened, and I think that it would be of concern to committee members and the Scottish Parliament.

**Roderick Campbell:** On the energy union, I see that Maroš Šefčovič is due in the United Kingdom on 13 July. I do not know whether anyone can find out whether he proposes to have any discussions with any member of the Scottish Government during that visit.

**The Convener:** As there are no more comments or questions, are members happy to share the “Brussels Bulletin” with other relevant committees? Maybe we could specifically highlight the point that has been raised on the alcohol issue to the Health and Sport Committee and the point that has been raised on energy to the Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee.

**Members indicated agreement.**

**Jamie McGrigor:** Does the “Brussels Bulletin” go to all the committees?

**The Convener:** Yes.

**Jamie McGrigor:** Do we ever get any feedback?

**The Convener:** I do not think so, although the rapporteurs on the committees usually take forward the issues. Some of those rapporteurs are members of this committee.

**Hanzala Malik:** Are you volunteering, Jamie?

**Jamie McGrigor:** Volunteering for what, Hanzala?

**Hanzala Malik:** To take messages and bring messages—

**Jamie McGrigor:** From other committees? No. I just wondered whether anything of interest had come back.

**Hanzala Malik:** Convener, is it fair to say that, if a committee finds something of interest, it will normally pursue the matter itself?

**The Convener:** Committees have done so. When we are updating the European strategy and we get feedback from all the committees, we can see the areas that they have picked up and done work on.

**Jamie McGrigor:** Okay. Thank you very much.

**The Convener:** We agreed to take agenda item 4 in private.

11:05

*Meeting continued in private until 11:25.*

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