

Looking back on → **home & away** ::: *comparing national policies for live arts touring*

IETM/VTi Satellite Meeting, 29th-30th May 08, deBuren, Brussels

On May 29-30, 2008 [IETM, international network for contemporary performing arts](#) and [VTI](#) (Flemish Performing Arts Institute) organised a two-day seminar on national policies for international touring in the performing arts, in the context of an [IETM Satellite meeting in Brussels](#). 50 cultural policy makers from 27 European countries discussed the results of a survey on this topic and went into a discussion about the way their governments support international cooperation in the performing arts. In November 2008, a comprehensive report of the seminar will be published in book form.

Starting point

During the last decades, international exchange has boomed in the performing arts sector. There have been more co-productions and more networks. The mobility of individual artists has increased. Political, technological and economic developments helped to turn Europe into a seemingly self-evident biotope for production and presentation of performing arts. However, there are clearly some imbalances in this transnational performing arts sphere. International touring remains labour-intensive and costly. Different parameters have an impact on the chances for productions to go on tour internationally: the country of origin and destination, the artistic discipline, the size of the production, the symbolic and social capital of the producers and presenters... Touring internationally seems to be more self-evident for some than it is for others.

The seminar '[Home & Away](#)' was aimed at mapping how national governments relate to this situation. How they support the international distribution of performing arts productions in Europe?

During the seminar special attention was given to a) the comparison of general policy objectives and motives, b) the different instruments that governments implement to pursue these objectives and c) the monitoring and evaluation of these initiatives through data collections and applied research. These issues were also the subject of an extensive survey which we sent out to prepare for the seminar. 24 correspondents replied to an extensive questionnaire on how the governments in their countries address these issues.

Program

The seminar started with an introductory session, with input from Mary Ann DeVlieg ([IETM](#), welcome and introduction), Kristien De Coster (talking about the international practice of [Ultima Vez](#)), Joris Janssens ([VTI](#), presenting preliminary results of the survey as an introduction to the various workshops) and Andreas Wiesand (reflecting on the theme of international mobility from the of the [ERICarts Institute](#) in Bonn).

After this, three workshops focused on different aspects:

- Riitta Seppälä ([Arts Council Finland](#)) kicked off a first working session calling for a better cross-collaboration between different ministries (culture, foreign affairs, trade, tourism ...) dealing with the matter involved. Martha Monstein ([Pro Helvetia](#)) gave some feedback after which Henk Scholten ([Theatre Institute Netherlands](#)) moderated a debate with the audience.
- A second session was about *the pros and contras of "top down" and "bottom up" policies*: must governments take on an actively interventionist approach, or should they rather respond to initiatives from the field? Yvette Vaughan Jones ([Visiting Arts](#), UK) explained the structure, objectives and policy instruments with which the United Kingdom tries to link up artistic and socio-political finalities. Elona Bajoriniene ([Vilnius Cultural Capital of Europe 2009](#)) gave comments, starting a debate moderated by Ann Olaerts ([VTI](#)).
- The session on the *use of data and statistics to monitor and shape policies* was moderated by Dries Moreels ([VTI](#)). He gave an overview of remarkable methodological differences in the practice of various governments and research institutes in Europe. Marion Wester ([DSP Group](#), a research company from Netherlands) introduced a recent study on the international position of theatre and dance from the Netherlands. Andreas Wiesand ([ERICarts](#)) commented.

In a closing session Zora Jaurova ([CCP Slovakia](#)), Nathalie Vimeux ([ONDA](#), France), Mary Ann DeVlieg ([IETM](#)) and Ann Olaerts ([VTI](#)) looked back on the two-day seminar.

Further follow-up

The report of the seminar and the results of the survey will be published by VTI and IETM and will be presented at the [IETM Plenary Meeting in Zürich](#) (6 - 9 November 2008).



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