



Lord Frost CMG
Minister of State
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Mr Julian Knight MP
Chair, DCMS Committee
House of Commons
SW1A 0AA

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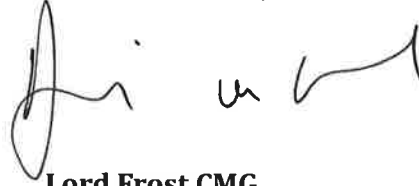
Dear Julian,

CREATIVE WORK IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

1. Thank you for your letter of 11 March regarding creative work in the European Union and last year's TCA negotiations.
2. The British people voted to take back control of our borders and end free movement with the EU in the 2016 referendum. That was a key part of the manifesto on which the Government won the 2019 election and is accordingly reflected in the TCA outcome. We clearly could not expect to end free movement into the UK while imagining that nothing would change as regards movement into the EU. Just like us, EU member states have the right to control their own borders and arrangements for non-EU workers. It was inevitable therefore that there would be significant changes in the arrangements under which creative workers work in the EU in future, all the more so because many of the relevant rules are set at Member State level rather than at EU level.
3. Nevertheless we were determined to do everything possible to support our world-class creative industries. That is why, as you note, we made proposals during the negotiations which would have allowed creative workers to travel and perform in the EU more easily, without needing work permits. In practice, they would have delivered an outcome that is closer to the UK's current approach to incoming musicians, artists and entertainers. These were developed following consultation with creative industries groups. Unfortunately these proposals were rejected by the EU.
4. The EU made its own proposals regarding the paid activities that can be conducted without a visa. These proposals would not have addressed UK creatives' concerns: they were non-binding, did not include touring or technical staff, and did not address work permits. They also formed part of a broader package on visa-free travel that would not have been consistent with the UK's manifesto commitment to take back control of our borders.
5. Nevertheless, the UK and EU have unilaterally decided not to impose visas on short-stay visitors. Some Member States however do not allow touring artists to use this route to enter the EU. As a result, visas will be required to tour in these countries, in the same way that they are required for other overseas artists.

6. The Government is now focused on helping touring professionals adjust to this new relationship with the EU. This work is led by the Department of Culture, Media, and Sport, working with colleagues across government. Through the DCMS-led working group, we are working intensively to develop plans to support the sector. We are also engaging with Member States to make sure we properly understand their rules on entry and work in this area and can support UK professionals in using them, as it is regrettably the case that some EU Member States have complex and bureaucratic rules for visas in this area.
7. We in the UK have significantly more generous arrangements for touring professionals than many Member States. If individual Member States should be willing to liberalise their own rules, we will certainly be happy to have those discussions and will encourage them to do so.
8. Finally, as regards appearing before your Committee, I have of course received many requests from Committee chairs to appear in my first six weeks as a Minister. I hope you will understand that my priority will be to appear in the first instance before the two Committees in the Commons and Lords directly charged with scrutinising my work. I can well imagine that this aspect of the negotiations may come up in hearings with them but obviously if there are aspects that still need discussion after that I will do my best to clarify them. That said, the negotiating history is of course water under the bridge now, and the focus is on supporting the creative industries now and into the future, where Ministers in the Department for Culture, Media, and Sport have lead responsibility and are best placed to answer specific questions about this work in the future.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frost', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Lord Frost CMG