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CULTURE MOVES AFRICA

Mapping of African artistic mobility

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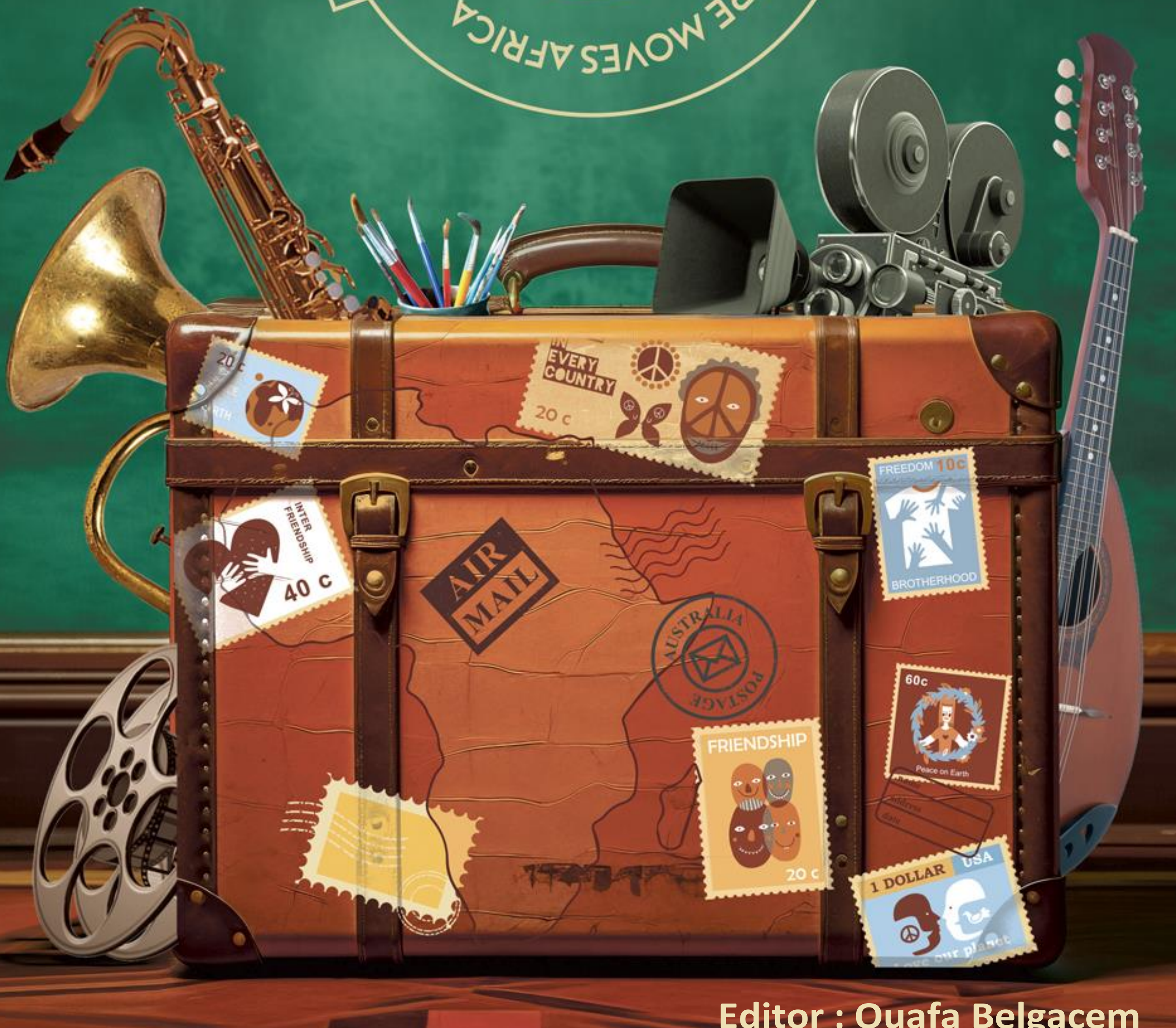

Editor : Ouafa Belgacem

Foreword

I am delighted to present this study on artistic mobility in Africa — a subject that is deeply close to my heart, not only as a researcher and practitioner in the cultural sector, but also as an advocate for Africa's cultural and creative industries, as I firmly believe in their power to foster connection, peace and brotherhood amongst people.

We are living through a time of upheaval.
Whilst the world teeters between geopolitical crises, moral collapse and democratic exhaustion, artists and creative workers continue, tirelessly, to create, to speak out and to resist. They carry humanity's memory, anger, beauty and hopes, as well as love and justice.

In this context, championing African artistic mobility is not a luxury. It is a political act. It is asserting our right to move freely, to learn, to pass on knowledge, and to tell the world's story from our own territories and through our own perspectives.

Artistic mobility is not merely about the movement of artists ; it is about shifting imaginaries, decolonising cultural flows, breaking free from the one-size-fits-all model dictated by dominant cultures, and defending diversity.

This study is an invitation to see things differently. To rethink mobility as a cultural right, a vital infrastructure, a peaceful tool for reconnecting peoples and restoring the dignity of free movement.

As for my own continent, Africa : for many years now, I have observed just how much artists' mobility is both a vital force and a challenge.

It is often discussed in the context of international programmes, North–South cooperation and externally funded residencies. But all too rarely do we pause to look at what is happening amongst us, here in Africa : internal movements, regional solidarity and endogenous initiatives that breathe life into creative practice on a daily basis.

This study arose from the conviction that we needed to shift our perspective. Intra-African artistic mobility is neither a marginal phenomenon nor a mere dependence on international aid. It reflects local energy, collective expertise and an ability to devise models of cultural cooperation deeply rooted in our realities.

Through this research, we sought to highlight local dynamics, document what already exists, and also to recognise and celebrate the role of African artists, institutions and communities who, often with limited resources, succeed in building bridges and creating spaces for freedom and exchange.

Our approach was intended to be both rigorous and human-centred.
We worked with experts from all the continent's sub-regions, listened to more than 603 voices through the continent-wide questionnaire, and conducted interviews with representatives of governments, networks, funders and artistic collectives.

Beyond the figures and analyses, this report is a call to action.

It calls on decision-makers, funders, institutions and artists themselves to rethink mobility not as a privilege or a favour, but as a cultural right and a catalyst for change. Supporting intra-African mobility means investing in creativity, in mutual understanding, and in building a united, interconnected and sustainable African cultural space.

I would like to thank the ten regional experts and the more than six hundred artists, practitioners and institutions who agreed to take part in this study.

To African artists and creative professionals, I salute their commitment, creativity and courage, which give this work its strength : that of an Africa standing tall, which looks at itself, reflects on itself and connects with itself, for itself, and with the world.

'We must write our own narratives and forge our own paths to mobility.'

Ouafa Belgacem

CEO, Culture Funding Watch

Culture Funding Watch (CFW) is a platform for mobilising sustainable resources dedicated to creators in the Global South. Its mission is to support practitioners and professionals in the arts and culture sector in accessing resources, whilst working towards sustainable, transparent and smart funding for the cultural and creative industries (CCI).

CFW builds the capacity of the cultural and creative industries through three pillars: access, knowledge and community. By facilitating access to information, data and resources, building skills, and conducting research and advocacy on cultural funding, CFW acts as a strategic facilitator. The organisation thus promotes the sector and connects artists, policy-makers, cultural managers and entrepreneurs with the resources they need to increase their impact and ensure their growth.

https://culturefundingwatch.com

DECONFINING is a four-year EU-funded project bringing together cultural practitioners, artists, policy-makers and audiences from two continents – Europe and Africa. Dedicated to fostering a better understanding of forms of confinement (social, political and economic) from different perspectives, the project aims to explore and develop new forms of intercontinental artistic and cultural cooperation (and in the field of cultural policy), as well as to provide better access and information for intercontinental mobility and co-creation.

http://deconfining.eu

Editor : Ouafa Belgacem
Researchers and contributors : Ouafa Belgacem, Ghita Khaldi, Koffi Kouame Aurelien, Modikwwa Tshireletso, Ama Ofeibea Tetteh, Joel Komlan Senam Hevi, Alejandro de los Santos Pérez, Zambuko Melody
Co-ordinators : Ouafa Belgacem, Rania Tarhouni
Graphic design and layout : Slim Ben Chiekh

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I – INTRODUCTION

I- INTRODUCTION

In Africa, artistic mobility is not merely a matter of artists travelling or works being disseminated. It is a vital force — a constant flow of ideas, talent and experiences that sustains the continent's creativity. It connects regions and carries individual imaginations across borders, enabling the exchange of knowledge and preserving the bridges between Africa's richly open cultures. Mobility nurtures the diversity of artistic expression, deepens community ties and contributes, as part of a broader movement, to the emergence of a more integrated and cohesive African cultural space.

Yet, despite its fundamental role, this mobility remains poorly understood and, above all, has been scarcely studied in its intra-African dimension. Numerous research projects, programmes and policies have focused on exchanges between Africa and the rest of the world, particularly within the framework of international cooperation or North-South cultural mobility programmes. This work has helped to document certain trends and improve funding mechanisms. However, they sheds very little light on another reality : that of intra-continental mobility, of South-South flows and of networks of African artists, collectives and institutions that are forging new forms of collaboration every day.

This gap carries significant implications for how we understand and analyse artistic mobility in Africa. It perpetuates the notion that African artistic mobility can only exist through the support of external partners, reinforcing the misguided assumption that nothing meaningful is happening locally. The reality tells a different story. Across every region, endogenous initiatives are taking root : self-managed artist residencies, travelling festivals, hybrid creative spaces, cultural cooperatives, and digital platforms connecting African artists, organisers and audiences. Driven largely by local actors and supporters without substantial international backing, these initiatives demonstrate that African creativity and solidarity are powerful forces capable of reshaping how culture is circulated, produced and shared.

The aim of this study is therefore clear : to bring these invisible dynamics to light. In this context, to understand intra-African artistic mobility, it is equally crucial to recognise that the issue is not solely about funding or access to mobility grants. Rather, it is part of a complex set of factors — political, economic, geographical, technological and symbolic — that shape artists' trajectories and profoundly influence the development of the cultural and creative industries (CCI) on the continent.

Our approach therefore seeks to explore mobility in all its facets :

- The individual journeys of artists who, from Dakar to Nairobi, are charting new creative paths;
- The mobility hubs emerging as new regional cultural centres — Accra, Tunis, Johannesburg, Kigali, Lagos and beyond;
- The persistent structural barriers that continue to constrain movement : visa restrictions, insufficient domestic funding and inadequate infrastructure.

By shedding light on these practices, this study aims to deepen our understanding of intra-African artistic mobility and to inform the development of more inclusive public policies. It seeks to reframe mobility — not as a mere aid mechanism, but as a fundamental cultural right, an instrument of social cohesion, and a transformative lever for the continent's creative economies.

Beyond the figures and programmes, this research ultimately seeks to celebrate the dynamism of a continent in motion : one where artists — despite borders, scarce resources and countless constraints — continue to invent new ways of moving, new narratives, and new ways of being together.

II. METHODOLOGY

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1. A Critical and Constructive al Approach

The methodological approach underpinning this study is based on a central conviction : to challenge the assumptions that intra-African artistic mobility is marginal, fragile or wholly dependent on international aid, and to draw on a broader evidence base than calls for applications to mobility grants — instruments that originate primarily from the Global North. While these perceptions are rooted in partial realities — notably the lack of public funding, the scarcity of structured support mechanisms and reliance on certain external partners — they do not capture the complexity or richness of the local dynamics at work across the continent.

Our approach has therefore been critical yet constructive, seeking to acknowledge existing limitations whilst highlighting the efforts, initiatives and endogenous resources deployed by African actors : states, local authorities, local foundations, private patrons, cultural institutions and professional networks.

The aim is not to catalogue what is not working, but rather to build an objective picture of what already exists — to assess its reach where the evidence allows, to identify promising practices and to draw from them lessons capable of strengthening the long-term sustainability of African cultural mobility. Put simply, the aim is to give credit where credit is due : to recognise and document what Africans are already doing to support their artists and nurture intra-continental exchange.

2. A Tripartite Approach

The methodology was structured around three main, complementary strands :

2.1. Research Documentation & Critical Analysis Of Existing Sources

A comprehensive literature review was conducted to map available publications, reports and studies on artistic mobility in Africa. This stage enabled us to take stock of existing knowledge, assess the predominant analytical frameworks — which tend to privilege international cooperation over intra-continental dynamics — and identify the gaps that persist in research on intra-African mobility. The data gathered were examined critically to surface broader trends, methodological limitations and recurring blind spots in the existing literature.

2.2. Regional data collection by African experts[1]

Seven regional experts from across the continent, selected for their in-depth knowledge of local cultural and institutional contexts, were mobilised to conduct qualitative and

[1] Joel Komlan Senam Hevi, Alejandro de los Santos Pérez, Ouafa Belgacem, Zambuko Melody, Modikwa shireletso, Ama Ofeibea Tetteh, Koffi Kouame Aurelien

quantitative data collection in their respective areas. Each expert was responsible for a group of countries and worked according to a harmonised methodological framework. The information gathered focused in particular on:

- local definitions and conceptions of artistic mobility;
- the integration (or lack thereof) of mobility into national public policies;
- the identification of stakeholders and institutions (ministries, agencies, foundations, private patrons, etc.) that directly or indirectly support mobility;
- existing funding mechanisms and support schemes.

This decentralised approach made it possible to account for the diversity of regional contexts and to develop a more granular understanding of local practices and conditions.

2.3. Continental survey and in-depth interviews

To supplement the regional data, a continental questionnaire was distributed in five languages (French, English, Arabic, Spanish and Portuguese) to ensure broad and inclusive participation. This questionnaire, comprising more than 50 questions, focused on mobility dynamics, preferred routes and destinations, funding methods, obstacles encountered, perceptions and best practices identified by the stakeholders themselves.
In total, over 600 responses were collected, covering a wide range of profiles (artists, cultural operators, decision-makers, etc.).

In addition, 21 in-depth individual interviews, each lasting approximately one hour, were conducted with representatives from governments, public institutions, international organisations, funders and cultural sector stakeholders. These conversations allowed us to explore key qualitative dimensions in greater depth, identify relevant case studies and document innovative initiatives that speak to the vitality and resourcefulness of local responses to the challenges of artistic mobility.

3. A Methodology Focused on -Recognition & Action

This combination of literature review, decentralised data collection and participatory research is designed to deliver a critical, empirical and forward-looking analysis of artistic mobility in Africa. It seeks not only to deepen our understanding of the drivers and flows of mobility across the continent, but also to bring local initiatives to the fore and equip decision-makers with evidence-based insights into avenues for emprovements.

The study thus proposes an approach that does not view mobility solely through the prism of funding or international programmes, but as a living system, driven by African actors who invent, experiment and adapt their models to the realities on the ground.

4. A Dual-Focus Analytical Framework

The study adopts a conceptual framework combining two levels of analysis:

Intra-African artistic mobility

This encompasses all forms of movement of artists and works within the continent, whether cross-border, regional or inter-regional. It focuses on South–South flows, emerging hubs and models of horizontal cooperation.

International African artistic mobility

It examines the external trajectories of African artists, the dominant destinations (Europe, the Americas, Asia, etc.) and the missing links. The aim is to identify possible correlations : countries or regions where strong internal mobility also facilitates access to international mobility, or vice versa.

This dual focus enables African artistic mobility to be situated within a global system where internal and external flows are not opposed but mutually reinforcing.

5. A Perspective Rooted in African Reality

This study is distinguished by its endogenous grounding. It draws on definitions, indicators and analytical frameworks co-constructed with African experts and practitioners, so as to reflect the diversity of contexts and the richness of local practices across the continent.

By adopting an empirical and participatory approach, it seeks to:

- recognise the initiatives and models that have emerged from the continent;
- reframe African artistic mobility within a global yet decentralised perspective, in which Africa is a producer of knowledge, rather than merely an object of study.

This vision positions artistic mobility not as a privilege or a dependency, but as an instrument of resilience and a driver of creative integration across the continent and beyond.

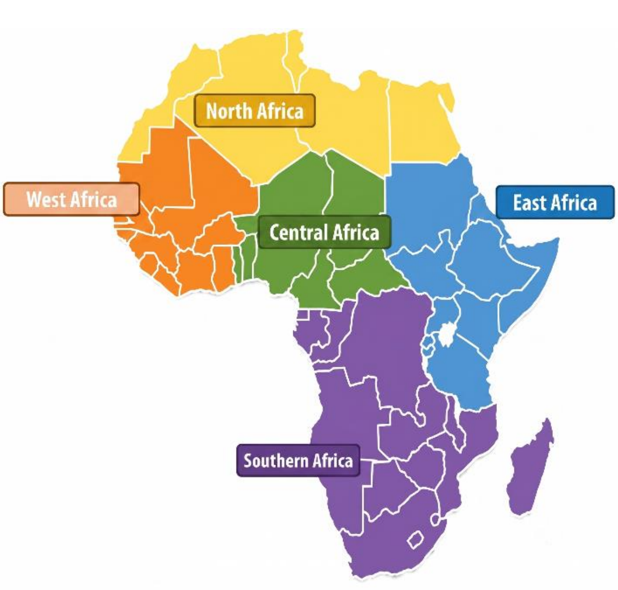
6. The Sub-Regional Approach : a Differentiated & Contextualised Analysis

In order to reflect the diversity of the African continent and avoid a homogenising lens, this study adopted a sub-regional approach. This methodological choice rests on the recognition that artistic mobility dynamics are shaped by political, economic, geographical and cultural contexts that are specific to each region. Regulatory frameworks, cultural infrastructure, government priorities and cooperation networks vary considerably from one area to the next, making a differentiated reading essential to capturing local realities with precision.

This approach also makes it possible to better identify the complementarities and disparities between regions, as well as the cross-regional flows of exchange that structure intra-African mobility.

For the purposes of this study, the sub-regional breakdown follows the framework commonly used by the African Union and the continent's principal institutional bodies[2], while also taking into account linguistic, historical and cultural cooperation proximities.

Five sub-regions were retained :



North Africa – comprising Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Mauritania and Tunisia.

West Africa – comprising the ECOWAS countries (Benin, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Sudan, Ghana, Guinea, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo) and Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger

Central Africa – comprising Cameroon, Angola, Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, the Central African Republic, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Chad.

East Africa – comprising Burundi, the Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Rwanda, the Seychelles, Somalia, South Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda.

Southern Africa – including South Africa, Botswana, Eswatini, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

This division makes it possible to:

- put the data into context and identify regional specificities;
- highlight networks of stakeholders and emerging cultural hubs at sub-regional level;
- detect cross-regional correlations in the flows of artists and works;
- and, finally, to formulate recommendations tailored to each geographical context.

In this way, the sub-regional approach contributes to a more nuanced and balanced understanding of African artistic mobility, whilst facilitating comparison, knowledge-sharing and the development of tailored public policies.

[2] List of countries classified by sub-region taken from: https://www.afdb.org/fr/countries

7. Operational Definitions

To ensure analytical consistency, the following definitions have been adopted:

Artistic mobility: any process of physical, virtual, or symbolic movement that allows an artist, an artwork, or a cultural practitioner to travel or circulate for the purpose of creation, training, dissemination, or cooperation.

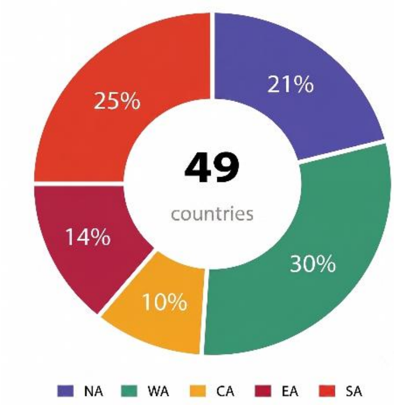
Intra-African mobility: the entire range of artistic movements occurring between African countries or across regions of the continent.

International mobility of African artists: the circulation of African creators toward destinations outside the continent, including participation in residencies, festivals, fairs, markets, or international cooperation projects.

8. Methodology In Figures

The study collected 603 questionnaires from 49 African countries. 5 countries are completely absent : Djibouti, The Gambia, Sierra Leone, Somalia and South Sudan ; Countries present but with very low visibility: Eritrea (mentioned once) and Eswatini (mentioned once).

Graph 1: Number of countries by sub-region



Graph 2: Sub regional representation of countries

III. DEFINITIONS & EXPERIENCES OF MOBILITY

III- DEFINITIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF MOBILITY

1. Cross- Analysis of Definitions

> *This chapter presents a qualitative and quantitative analysis of representations of artistic mobility as expressed by professionals in the cultural and creative industries (CCI) across the African continent. It draws on two complementary data sets : firstly, qualitative accounts gathered through semi-structured interviews with cultural professionals; and secondly, 603 open-ended responses to the question 'What is your definition of mobility?', collected via a questionnaire from practitioners across all African sub-regions. A comparison of these two sources reveals a multidimensional and convergent conception of mobility that is at once physical, informational, financial and educational*.

The definitions gathered converge towards a transversal vision that encompasses not only physical movement, but also the objectives of learning, dissemination, exchange and access to resources. Mobility is understood in a multidimensional sense, articulating physical displacement, exchange, training and the circulation of resources. None of these dimensions alone is sufficient to capture the full conception that practitioners and stakeholders hold of this concept.

The following table shows the frequency of the main themes, calculated based on the occurrence of characteristic terms and expressions in the responses.

Table 1 — Thematic mapping of definitions of mobility (n = 603)

Main theme	No.	%	Example response
Physical movement / travel	205	34.0%	'Moving from one place to another'
Cross-border / international mobility	104	17.2%	'Temporary cross-border movement'
Exchange, networking, collaboration	90	14.9%	'Cultural exchange and sharing'
Circulation of works	80	13.3%	'Dissemination of artistic creations'
Access to information / opportunities	77	12.8%	'Access to knowledge and resources'
Training / learning	75	12.4%	'Travel to learn or teach'
Funding / material support	48	8.0%	'Funds for travel and accommodation'
Freedom / absence of barriers	43	7.1%	'Freedom without restrictions'
Access to the public / market	40	6.6%	"Reach new audiences and markets"
Artist residencies	14	2.3%	'Artist residency and co-creation'
Universal right	13	2.2%	'The universal right to freedom of movement'
Digital/virtual mobility	6	1.0%	"Digital tools enabling mobility"

Source: online questionnaire. Thematic coding via lexical analysis.
Note: the percentages are not mutually exclusive, as a single response may relate to several themes.

The table calls for several observations : The dimension of physical movement is the most frequently mentioned (34 %), followed by cross-border and international mobility (17.2 %). These two dimensions, which can be regarded as two facets of the same reality – movement through space – together form the dominant foundation of perceptions of mobility. They confirm what the qualitative interviews had already highlighted.

Next come the themes of exchange and networking (14.9%), the circulation of works (13.3 %) and access to information (12.8%). These three dimensions, which go beyond mere physical movement, reflect a broader and more functional conception of mobility, shared by a significant proportion of respondents.

Finally, themes such as funding (8.0 %), freedom of movement (7.1 %) and market access (6.6 %) complete the picture, revealing the material and institutional conditions without which mobility remains an aspiration without concrete realisation.

1.1 The Physical Dimension : Freedom of Movement as a Fundamental Right

In the qualitative interviews, this dimension is clearly articulated by Humphrey (Malawi), for whom mobility is first and foremost *'the ability to move between different jurisdictions'*. This formulation encapsulates a fundamental demand : that of the right to freedom of movement for African artists, in a context where visa regimes and migration policies constitute structural barriers to African cultural development.

> *"it's simply a straightforward process enabling artists to travel across countries, across borders, and present their work, their aspirations – whatever that may be."*
>
> — Humphrey, Malawi

It is worth noting the geographical nuance introduced by Ana (Cape Verde), who emphasises that in an archipelago, mobility begins between islands before crossing national borders ; this is also confirmed by the quantitative data. Several respondents mention sub-national and local mobility, pointing out that the hierarchy of local, national, regional and international scales is not universal and must be contextualised.

1.2 The Informational Dimension : Access to Knowledge as a Prerequisite for Mobility

A second dimension, less obvious but just as fundamental, emerges from both sets of data : that of the flow of information. In the qualitative interviews, Bréma (Mali) expresses this forcefully by defining mobility as 'inter-facilitation', encompassing not only geographical movement but also access to information and the ability to transform it into opportunities.

> *“There must be information; we must have the information; and we must have the ability to access it, to be able to make use of it and turn it into opportunities for ourselves.”*
>
> — Bréma, Mali

This perspective is statistically significant: 12.8 % of the 603 responses incorporate the informational dimension and access to opportunities into their definition of mobility. One respondent puts it particularly clearly:

> *“Mobility is the ability to take advantage of opportunities outside your own country without having to miss out on them for financial, administrative, bureaucratic or political reasons.” Another adds: “Having access to everything, especially information and tools...”*
>
> — Respondent, questionnaire

indicating that access to information is in itself a component of mobility, and not merely a prerequisite.

Luhena (Cape Verde) expands on this idea in the qualitative interviews by emphasising the regulatory dimension : being mobile means being able to access *“cultural understandings, regulations and laws of another country”.*

This aspect is confirmed in the quantitative data by responses emphasising that mobility requires knowledge of the legal and administrative frameworks of destination countries— knowledge that few African artists possess due to a lack of resources and appropriate information platforms.

This broader conception is of paramount importance. It means that an artist who is physically mobile but lacks information on available opportunities, regulations or funding is not truly mobile in the functional sense of the term. Informational mobility is thus a prerequisite for physical mobility.

1.3 The Financial and Material Dimension : The Mobility of Resources

The third dimension, that of funding and material support, is addressed in 8 % of the quantitative responses — a modest proportion in terms of frequency, but one of considerable qualitative importance.

Many respondents define mobility first and foremost by its funding conditions :

> *‘Funds to support the artist with travel, accommodation and other personal expenses when invited to events’, ‘Mobility is a more universal term referring to a grant awarded to an individual or organisation as a contribution towards the expenses and costs incurred during a project abroad’.*
>
> — Respondent, questionnaire

1.4 The Educational and Professional Dimension : Mobility as Training and Exchange

This dimension – that of training and professional exchange – is present in 12.4 % of the quantitative responses relating to training and in 14.9 % relating to exchange and networking — a total of 27.3 %, a significant proportion that exceeds all previous dimensions, with the exception of physical movement.

Both the qualitative and quantitative data overwhelmingly confirm this dimension. Terms such as 'exchange', 'sharing', 'collaboration' and 'networking' feature in a very large number of responses, with particular emphasis on the idea of cultural cross-pollinisation.

> *'Mobility, in my experience, I would define as the ability to take your creativity beyond where you are based to new places. It's about opening up new avenues and spaces for creative expression, but also about engaging in dialogue and interacting with unfamiliar forms of expression. This broadens your perspective, expands your network and provides you with diverse experiences from which to draw inspiration."*
>
> — Respondent, questionnaire

1.5 Mobility as Freedom and s a Right

The fifth dimension – that of mobility as a right – is explicitly present in the responses relating to the theme of 'freedom / absence of barriers' and in those that refer to a universal right; it transcends the functional or operational definition of mobility to place it within the realm of fundamental human rights.

This reflects a keen awareness of the obstacles – visa requirements, migration restrictions and discrimination – that African artists face in their attempts to travel internationally.

1.6 Digital Mobility : An Emerging Sixth Dimension

A sixth dimension emerges from the quantitative corpus data, in a far more subtle but analytically interesting way : that of digital mobility. It refers to the ability of artists and works to circulate within immaterial spaces—platforms, networks and data flows—independently of any physical movement. Although it is explicitly named as such in only a limited number of responses (1% of the corpus), its latent presence is in fact much more widespread once the focus is broadened to include related concepts such as accessibility, visibility, the circulation of works and networking without geographical constraints.

The digital dimension of mobility reflects a profound strategic logic within the African context. Faced with structural obstacles—such as visa, transport costs and underfunding, digital technology is cited as a means of alternative or circumventing mobility.

‘Mobility is rooted in the ability to share art, as well as cultural information and knowledge, regardless of other physical constraints such as proximity, geographical proximity, the ability to travel, eligibility or accommodation conditions.’

— Respondent, questionnaire

A word of caution: almost all respondents who mention the digital dimension view it as complementary to, rather than an alternative to, physical mobility:

“Being able to move both physically and virtually without any restrictions.”

— Respondent, questionnaire

The phrase “physically and virtually” is significant here : the two dimensions are conceived together, as two sides of the same freedom of movement.

A cross-analysis of qualitative testimonies and quantitative responses paints a picture of African artistic mobility that is at once desired, theorised and hindered. Stakeholders in the sector have a rich and multidimensional understanding of it—physical, informational, financial, educational and normative—which goes far beyond the simple act of moving from one point to another.

Towards an Operational and Consensus-Based Definition

Artistic mobility, as expressed by the professionals and artists who responded to this study, can be defined as an integrated system of facilitation enabling artists and cultural professionals to: move freely across administrative and geographical borders, from the local to the international level; access information on opportunities, regulations and foreign cultural environments; share their works and practices with diverse audiences beyond their usual area of operation; exchange ideas, undertake training and co-create with peers at regional and international levels; and have sufficient financial resources to ensure that such movement is genuinely possible, productive and sustainable.

This definition is consistent with that proposed by UNESCO, which several respondents explicitly cite in their replies: « *I agree with UNESCO’s definition: it is a temporary cross-border movement aimed at accessing career opportunities, collaborators, audiences and markets abroad.* » whilst enriching it with additional dimensions: the mobility of works, the educational dimension and its grounding in fundamental rights.

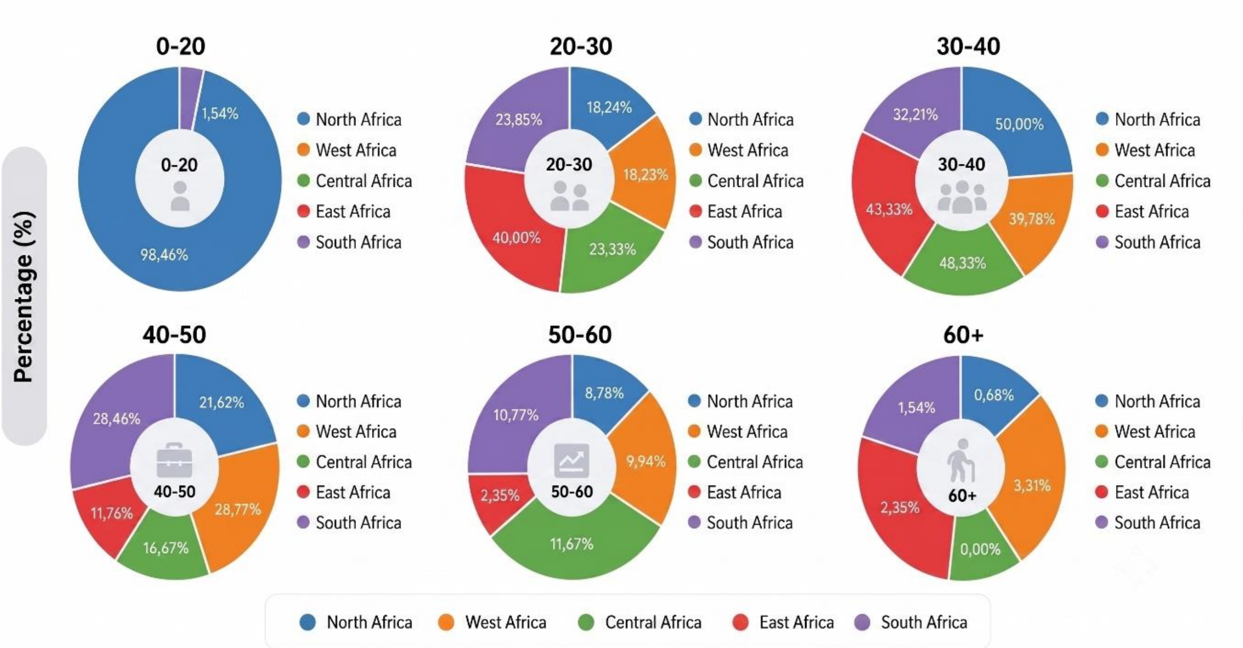
2. Participant Profiles and Sector- Dynamics

> *Analysis of socio-demographic data has revealed disparities between the various African sub-regions, reflecting distinct structural and cultural realities.*
>
> *The analytical summary of the study participants' profiles also provides essential insight into their socio-demographic and professional characteristics. An examination of the distribution by gender and age, as well as an analysis of the cultural sectors and types of organisations represented, has highlighted key characteristics of cultural professionals in Africa: a predominance of the middle age group (30–50 years) and marked gender imbalances across sub-regions, with an overall male dominance (with the notable exception of North Africa).*
>
> *Far from being mere statistical data, these profiles reflect deep-seated structural dynamics within Africa's cultural and creative industries (CCIs).*

2.1 Generational Dynamics

An examination of the age pyramid reveals that the majority of artists are in the prime of their professional careers, mainly concentrated in the 30–50 age group. The 30–40 age group is particularly well represented, accounting for 50 % in Southern Africa and 48.33 % in Central Africa.

Graph 3: Breakdown by age and sub-region



At the continental level, the older age brackets (50 and above) remain in the minority, reflecting the more limited representation of artists at a mature stage of their careers.

Overall, this age profile points to a dynamic artistic sector driven by intermediate generations in a phase of career consolidation or expansion. This concentration raises a crucial question when set against the demographic realities of the continent.

Africa has the youngest population in the world, with a median age of 19.[3] years and nearly 60 % of its population (around 890 million people) under the age of 25. This young population is often presented as the main driving force behind the African creative economy, which is expected to stimulate digital innovation and cultural consumption. However, the relative under-representation of the very young people (under 30) in international mobility within our sample suggests a disconnect between artistic practice and professionalisation.

This situation can be explained by the fact that international mobility and the development of a cultural career require social, financial and institutional capital that takes years to build up. Young creators, although numerically in the majority and the driving force behind new trends (such as Afrobeats music or gaming), often come up against the informal nature of the sector and the complexity of accessing start-up funding mechanisms. The 30–50 age group thus represents those who have managed to navigate these structural challenges to establish international networks and gain access to the scarce funding available.

2.2 Gender Asymmetry : Structural and Cultural Barriers

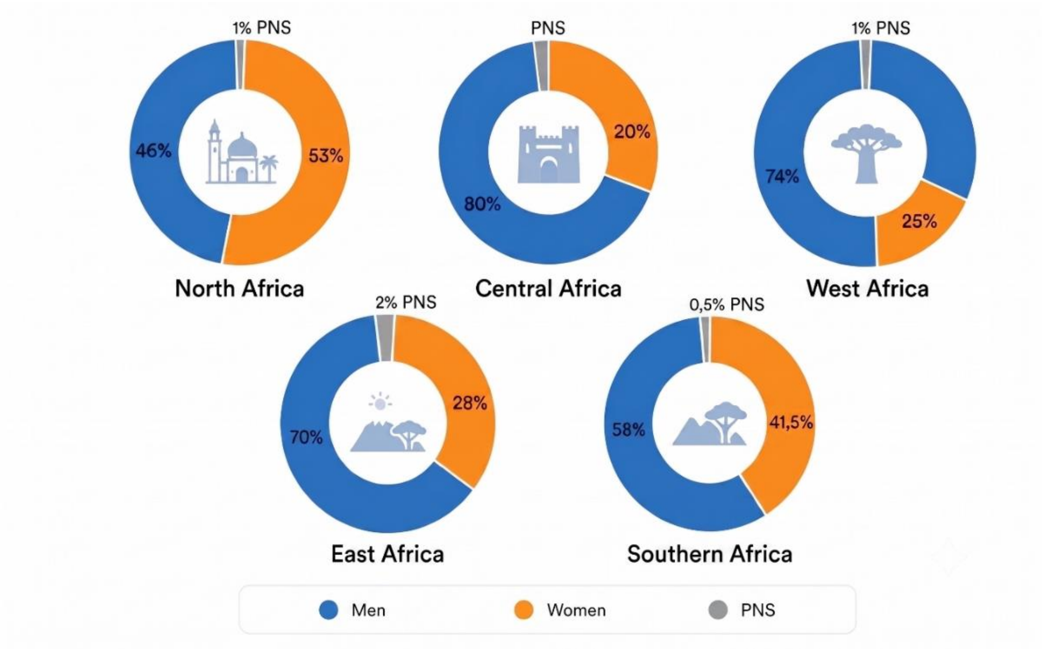
The data collected reveals a male dominance in most sub-regions (Central, West and East Africa), reflecting a systemic reality confirmed by numerous studies and publications which highlight that, despite their driving role in economic growth, women in the creative sector continue to be marginalised by systemic gender bias, cultural taboos and unequal access to opportunities[1]

North Africa stands out with a slight female majority (52.71 %), suggesting active participation and greater visibility among female artists linked to a different structure of cultural policies and more equal access to higher education in the arts.

Conversely, a strong male predominance characterises Central Africa (79.69 %), West Africa (73.48 %) and East Africa (69.41 %). Southern Africa presents a more balanced profile, with 58.11 % men and 41.22 % women. These disparities reflect differing realities that stem from the historical structure of local artistic communities, visibility biases and gender dynamics.

[3] Africa’s Creative Goldmine: Unlocking Growth Amid Gendered Challenges (2025). Mastercard Foundation.

Graph 4: Breakdown by gender and sub-region



This imbalance reflects economic and funding barriers, as well as socio-cultural and security barriers. According to a report by the Boston Consulting Group[4], women receive less than 10 % of the funding available in the African creative sector, a proportion that sometimes falls below 1 % in countries such as Nigeria. This lack of resources drastically limits their ability to fund international mobility projects, to structure their businesses or to take professional risks.

Artistic professionalisation is often perceived as incompatible with traditional gender roles (household management, motherhood). Women in the creative sector frequently have to juggle their jobs with family responsibilities, leading to career breaks and/or them giving up their careers altogether.

Furthermore, security concerns constitute an other major barrier to mobility and to the pursuit of the profession, particularly for those working in the performing arts, music or event management, where irregular working hours are the norm. These sometimes hostile working environments discourage women's participation and limit their access to the professional networks essential for mobility.

2.3 Sectoriel Dynamics

The performing arts stand out as the dominant sector across all sub-regions. It accounts for more than half of respondents in Central Africa (54.24 %) and stands at around 45–48 % in East and Southern Africa. This high concentration highlights the importance of traditional

[4] Signé, L. (2026). The rise of Africa's creative economy. Brookings Institution.

and contemporary forms of the performing arts (music, dance, theatre) in the dynamics of cultural creation and circulation across the continent.

The visual arts and crafts occupy a prominent position in North Africa (31.78 %) and Southern Africa (23.65 %). This significant representation reflects a dense visual arts scene, which is consistent with national policies supporting crafts and the creative industries, such as the Creative Tunisia programme, the National Strategy for Handicrafts, and UNIDO's 'Rabeha' programmes in Egypt.

Table 2 : Distribution of cultural sectors' by sub-region

Dominant sector	North Africa	West Africa	Central Africa	East Africa	Southern Africa
Performance & Celebration	28.68%	37.02%	54.24%	44.58%	48.65%
Visual arts and crafts	31.78%	17.13%	8.47%	14.46%	23.65%
Broadcasting & Media	15.50%	18.23%	13.56%	18.07%	10.14%

Other sectors — book publishing, heritage and design — are more weakly represented in the sample, indicating a relatively lower weight and/or a different structuring of these fields in relation to the challenges of mobility.

3. Experiences of Mobility

Beyond quantitative analysis, this chapter seeks to provide an assessment of the quality of the intra-African artistic mobility experience. In complement to the binary indicator of whether or not mobility has been accessed, we have sought to apprehend this quality through the following criteria: To these five dimensions are added two cross-cutting variables:

- *Frequency of access: How often does an artist or cultural professional receive support for mobility during their career, and do existing schemes provide long-term support?*

- *The duration of supported stays: How long can beneficiaries actually remain in the host country or region for each mobility programme?*

- *Geographical reach: Through an analysis of the extent of travel and the number of countries visited as part of supported mobility initiatives.*

- *The scope of financial support: What types of expenses are covered by mobility grants – transport, accommodation, daily allowances, insurance, equipment, vaccinations – and which costs remain the responsibility of the artist?*

- *Mobility objectives: What aims are targeted and supported by existing schemes – training, dissemination, networking, residencies, research – and to what extent do these correspond to the actual needs of the continent's cultural practitioners?*

To these five dimensions are added two cross-cutting variables: gender and the career stage of beneficiaries, which allow us to examine the extent to which access to funding is equitably distributed between men and women on the one hand, and between different generations of cultural professionals on the other.

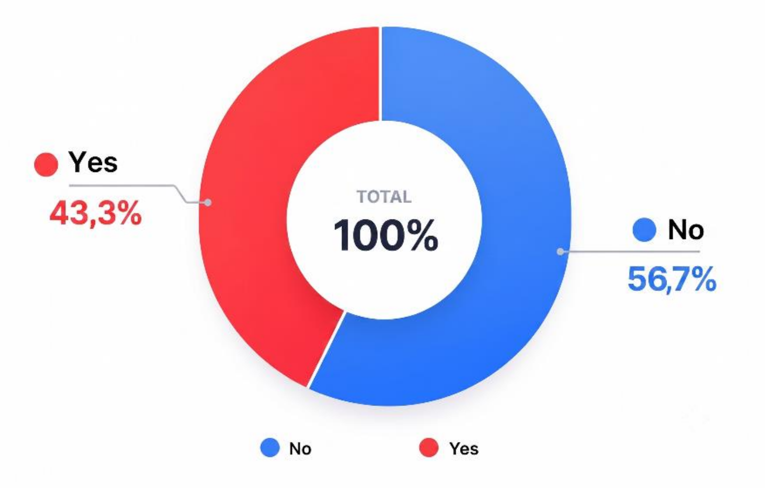
"My understanding is basically the ability to move things around, be it people or resources. It can be people, it can be resources, whether it's financial or other types of necessary movable resources. That's how I understand mobility." – Respondant - Botswana

3.1 ACCESS TO MOBILITY

3.1.1. Limited access to mobility, dominated by international funding

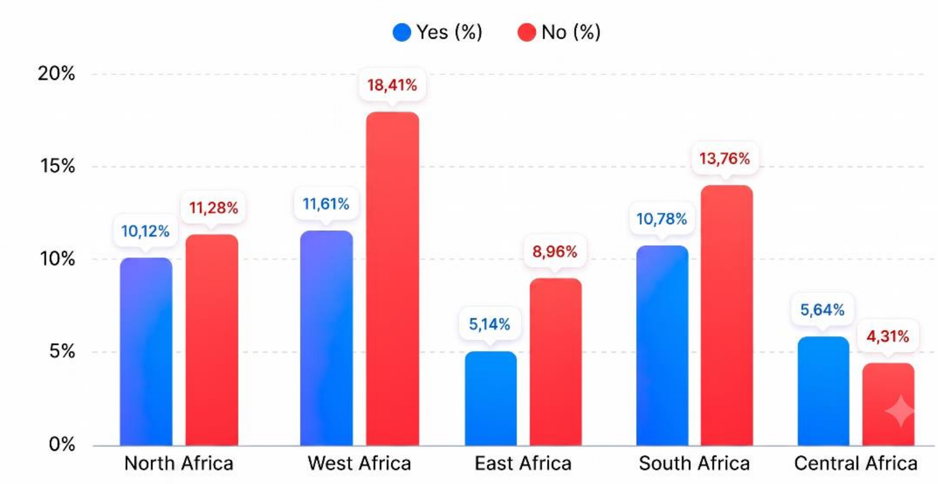
Data collected from participants shows that funding for artistic mobility remains selective and difficult to access for the majority of cultural practitioners on the continent. When asked « *Have you ever secured funding to support artistic mobility ?*», 56.72 % of respondents answered in the negative, compared with 43.28 % who stated they had benefited from such funding at least once. This result raises a fundamental question: do existing support schemes have the capacity and reach necessary to reach cultural practitioners, regardless of their geographical location, artistic discipline or experience in seeking funding?

Graph 5: Access to funding for artistic mobility



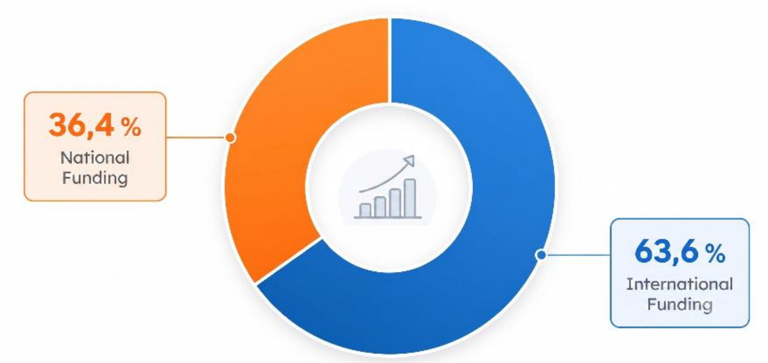
This trend is evident across all sub-regions of the continent.

Graph 6: Access to funding for artistic mobility by sub-region



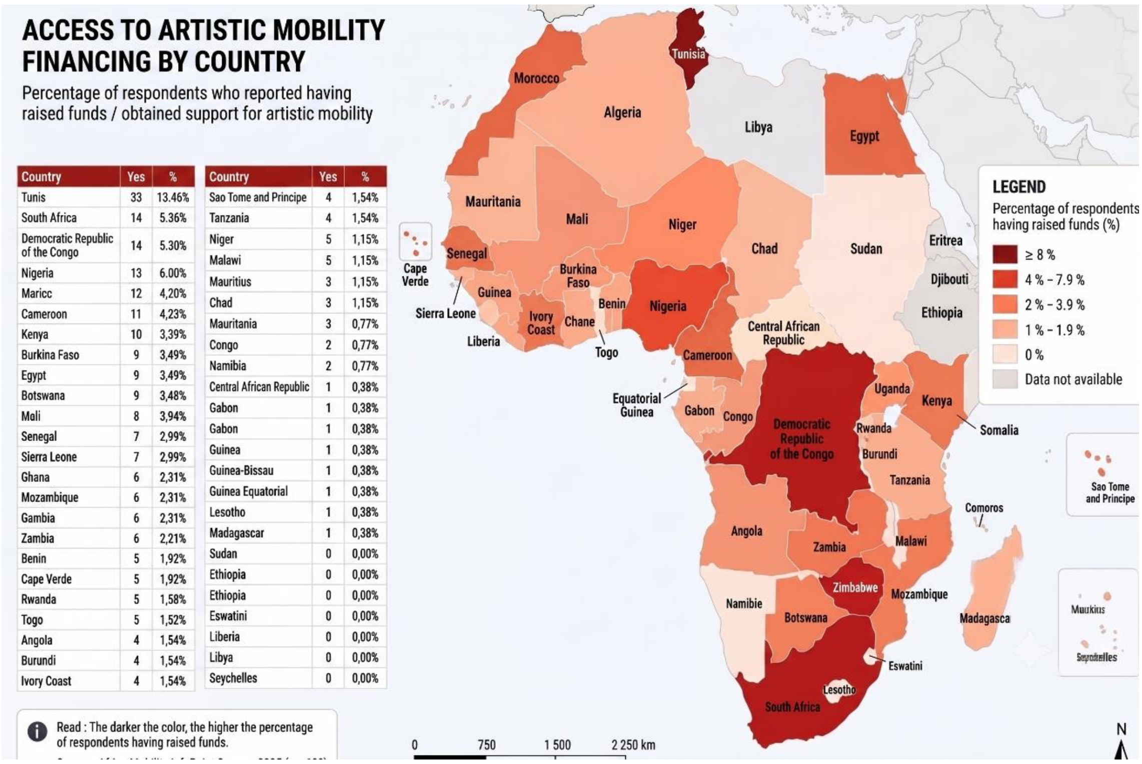
The breakdown of funding sources reveals a marked orientation towards external resources.: 63.6 % of respondents reported having received international funding from a foreign institution or organisation — compared with 36.4 % funded by national sources, whether public institutions, private foundations or cultural organisations operating within their own country.

Graph 7: Source of Funding

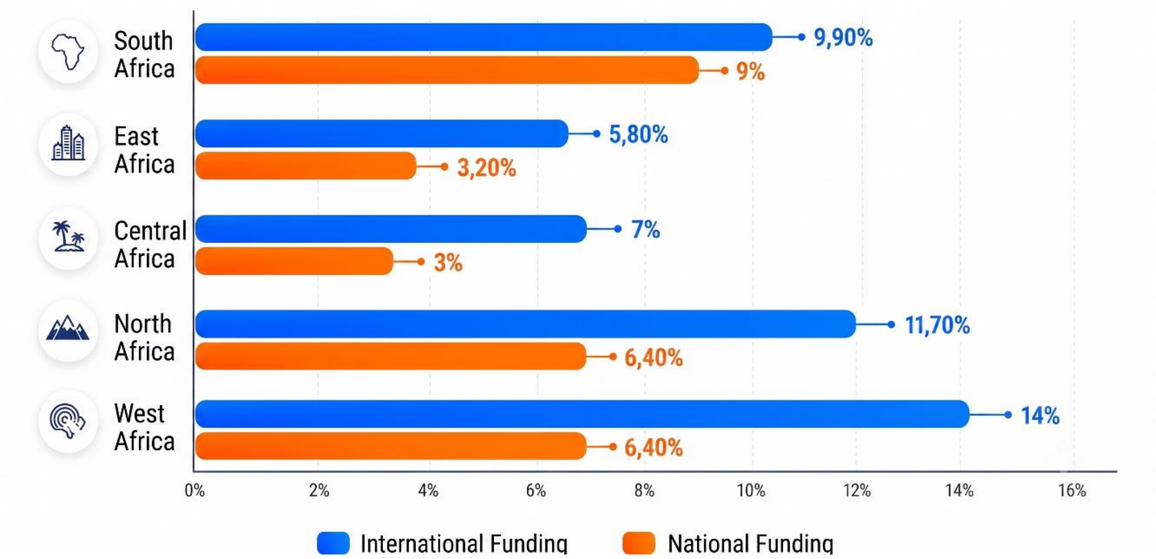


When considered in relation to the sample as a whole, the differences between international and national funding vary significantly from one sub-region to another. The gap is widest in West Africa (14 % international funding compared with 6.4 % national funding), followed by North Africa (11.7 % compared with 6 %), Central Africa (7% versus 3 %) and East Africa (5.8 % versus 3.2 %). Southern Africa, with a gap of less than one percentage point (9.9 % versus 9 %), remains the only sub-region where this reliance on external funding remains marginal.

Map 8: Geographical distribution of access to funding for artistic mobility in Africa



Graph 9: Sources of funding by sub-region



> *<u>A revealing inconsistency : the very concept of funding</u> Analysis of the data revealed an instructive inconsistency in the responses : whilst 261 respondents stated that they had 'raised funds', 392 respondents nevertheless provided details of the amounts received in response to the question « What is the value of the funding received?». This discrepancy of 131 respondents suggests that the very concept of 'funding' is understood in a narrow sense by many stakeholders. Many appear to equate 'fundraising' exclusively with formal institutional grants, excluding other forms of support (sponsorship, direct reimbursement of expenses, donations). This conceptual fragmentation highlights an urgent need to improve financial literacy.*
>
> **For detailed analyses of the amounts (sections 3.3 and following), the expanded sample of 392 respondents who had actually received support will be used.*

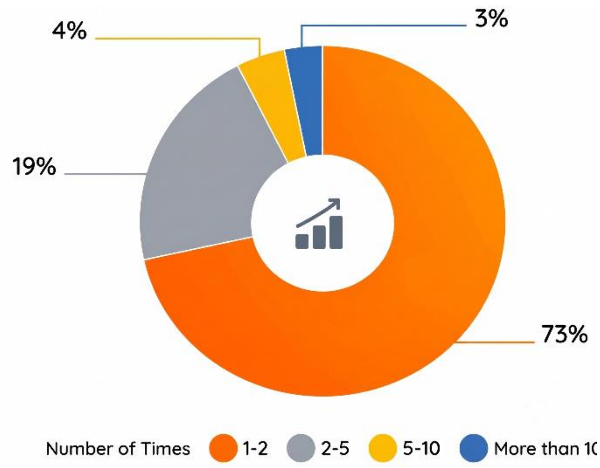
Taken together, these findings reveal that the significance of external funding for artistic mobility in Africa is not absolute, and that its intensity varies considerably across regions.

3.1.2. Low cumulative momentum in mobility

Participants' responses indicate that supported mobility is characterised by low frequency, short stays and a limited geographical reach to a small number of countries. These constraints, evident both in the number of grants received per individual and in the geographical scope of the mobility covered, limit the reach of support schemes and their ability to have a lasting impact on the career paths of the artists and cultural practitioners.

3.1.2.1. Limited frequency of support

Graph 10: Access to funding for artistic mobility

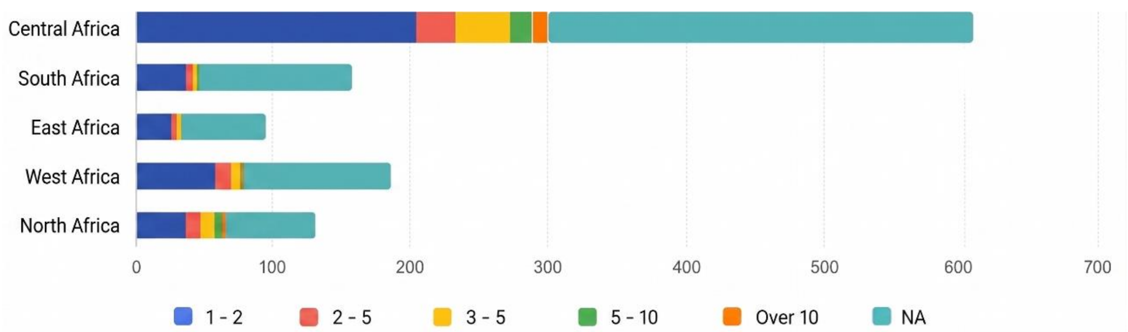


The frequency with which individuals receive support is one of the most significant telling indicators of the structural characteristics of existing schemes. Among respondents who declared having previously benefited from mobility support, 74% received only one or two grants in total. A further 19% received support for between two and five trips, while the higher brackets remain marginal : only 4% received support for between six and ten trips, and 3% for more than ten.

More than three-quarters of artists and cultural professionals who have had access to funding have only been able to benefit from it once or twice, which leaves even less scope for building a coherent and cumulative international career path.

This trend is replicated across all sub-regions, albeit to varying degrees. In Central Africa, the situation is particularly pronounced: no respondent reported having received support for more than five trips.

Graph 11: Number of artistic mobility grants received by sub-region



Category	North Africa	West Africa	East Africa	South Africa	Central Africa	Total
1 - 2	34	55	24	56	24	193
2 - 5	6	7	1	0	7	21
3 - 5	13	3	4	5	3	28
5 - 10	4	2	1	4	0	11
Over 10	4	3	1	0	0	8
NA	68	111	54	83	26	342
Total per region	129	181	85	148	60	603

This low level of cumulative access per individual reveals a distribution model that is still insufficiently geared towards the long-term support of artistic careers.

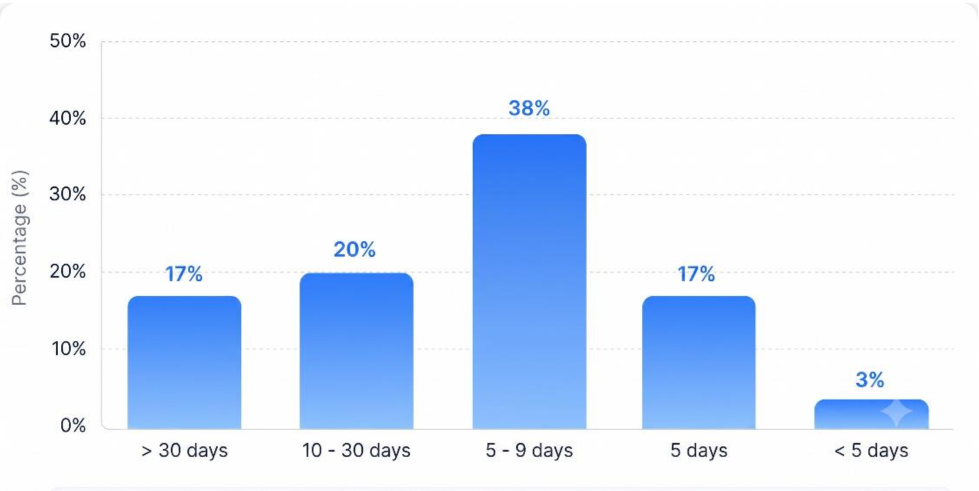
Several factors explain this situation. On the one hand, there is a persistent imbalance between the available support and the scale of demand, which limits the resources that can be allocated per beneficiary. On the other hand, the dominant selection criteria in the sector prioritise quantitative indicators – number of new recipients, geographical distribution, the imperative of fairness between applicants – at the expense of a long-term approach to consolidating individual career trajectories.

As a result, it is difficult for any one artist, over the course of their career, to gain access to a sufficient level of support to build a stable international presence.

3.1.2.2. Short-term mobility

Beyond frequency, the duration of supported stays provides a further indicator of the limitations of existing schemes in terms of impact. The data collected also reveal a concentration in the shortest timeframes : 58 % of respondents receive support for projects lasting fewer than ten days, of which 20 % were for fewer than five days and 38 % for a duration of between five and ten days. At the other end of the scale, 20 % of respondents received support for mobility lasting between ten and thirty days, and only 16 % for a duration exceeding thirty days.

Graph 12: Duration of artistic mobility



These figures paint a picture of mobility characterised by high intensity over a short period, geared more towards distribution and networking – participation in a festival, a conference or a trade fair – rather than towards processes of immersion or transformation.

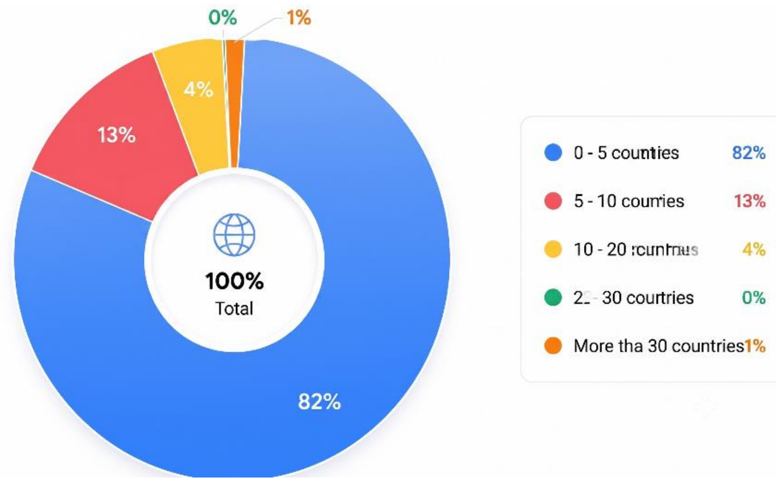
Whilst short-term formats have their own value and meet real needs, their clear predominance in the patterns observed leaves little scope for more immersive formats – long-term residencies, multi-date tours, creative collaborations – which are, however, the ones that most often enable artists to take their international careers to the next level.

3.1.2.3. Limited and undiversified international mobility

The fact that 82 % of respondents had visited between one and five countries indicates that the vast majority of African cultural practitioners still have international experience that is geographically limited. This situation reflects financial, administrative and structural constraints that continue to hinder access to mobility opportunities : the cost of travel, the complexity of visa procedures, the underdevelopment of regional distribution and co-production networks, and the uneven availability of support across sub-regions.

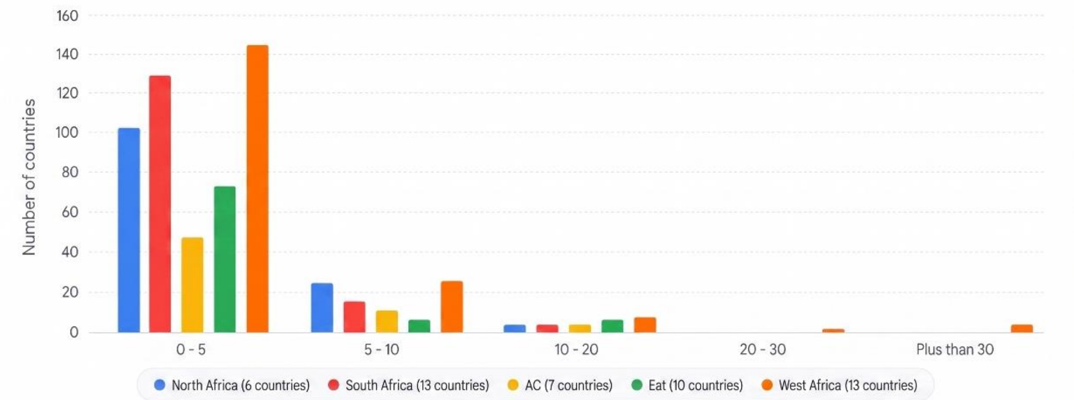
The proportion of participants who have visited more than five countries (13 %) suggests that, for the majority of respondents, mobility remains infrequent and is not yet sufficiently cumulative to generate the desired networking and market effects.

Graph 13: Number of countries visited



These observations are reflected at the sub-regional level, where the same general trends are confirmed, albeit with varying degrees of intensity across the different areas of the continent.

Graph 14: Number of countries visited by sub-region



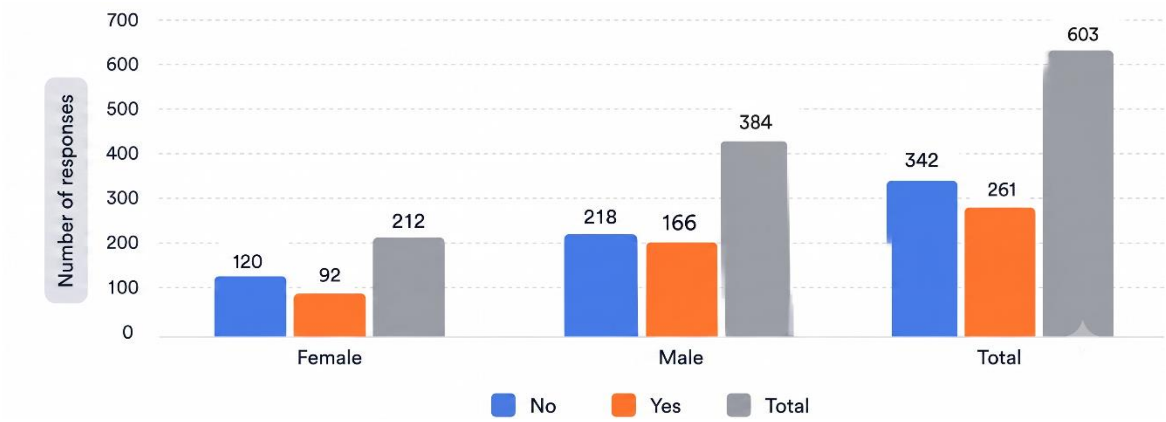
Category	0 - 5	5 - 10	10 - 20	20 - 30	Plus than 30	Total
North Africa (6 countries)	102	24	3	0	0	129
South Africa (13 countries)	130	15	3	0	0	148
Central Africa (7 countries)	47	10	3	0	0	60
East Africa (10 countries)	73	6	6	0	0	85
West Africa (13 countries)	143	26	7	1	4	60
Total per region	**129**	**181**	**85**	**148**	**60**	**603**

Taken together, the three dimensions analysed in this section – frequency of support, duration of stays and geographical scope – point to the same conclusion : sustained artistic mobility in Africa remains largely sporadic, short-term and geographically undiversified.

Yet it is precisely the accumulation and diversification of experiences that enable an artist or cultural professional to build a sustainable network, gain access to new markets and establish a recognised international presence. Unless the approach to funding shifts towards more continuous and better-targeted support, mobility support schemes will continue to fall short of their potential and their capacity to bring about lasting change in the career trajectories of African artists.

3.1.3. Gender Disparities in Access to funding

Graph 15; Access to funding for artistic mobility by gender



Data cross-analysed by gender and access to funding reveal a result that calls for a nuanced interpretation of figures based on absolute numbers. Indeed, in terms of the total number of beneficiaries, men are actually over-represented (166 men reported having raised funds, compared with 92 women), which might at first glance suggest that men have an advantage in accessing funding.

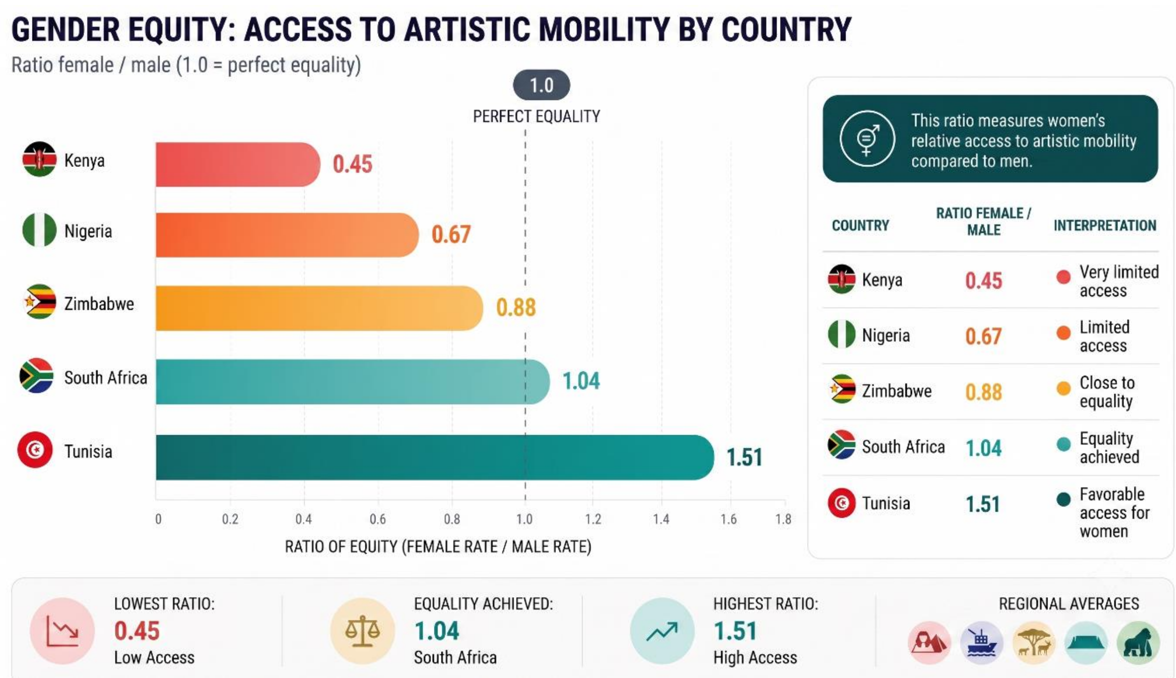
However, when these figures are set against the total number of respondents by gender, the rates of access appear almost identical : 43.2 % of men who responded reported having received mobility support, compared with 43.4 % of women – a difference of 0.2 percentage points, which is statistically negligible.

But an analysis based on the ratio reveals a different reality : using a ratio neutralises the differences in size between the male and female populations and thus provides a more relevant measure of equity of access.

The equity ratio, calculated by dividing the access rate for women by that for men in each country, provides a more detailed picture than the overall snapshot presented in the previous section.

A ratio of 1.0 indicates perfect equity; a ratio greater than 1.0 means that women have better access; a ratio less than 1.0 indicates the opposite. The analysis covers a sample of countries with a sufficient number of respondents (at least 30 respondents reporting that they had received mobility support, comprising at least 15 women and 15 men).

Graph 16: Equity ratio by country — access to funding for artistic mobility



*Selection threshold : a minimum of 30 respondents in total, including at least 15 women and 15 men.

The continental median of 0.89 reflects a slight bias in favour of men, but masks considerable disparities from one country to another.

Among the countries where women have the best relative access, Tunisia stands out with a ratio of 1.51 (61.5 % versus 40.7 %). This is a country where women benefit from structurally more favourable access to mobility funding schemes, which also reflects a greater female presence in the cultural sector.

Conversely, Nigeria (0.67) and Kenya (0.45) record the most pronounced gaps in favour of men. In Kenya, for example, 40.0 % of male respondents had raised funds, compared with just 18.2 % of women.

Other countries stand out for their near-equal situation : South Africa (1.04), where the rate of access for women and men is virtually identical, regardless of the absolute level of access observed in that country.

3.1.4. Access to finance linked to the career cycle

Data cross-analysed by age and access to funding reveal an increase in the access rate as artists progress in their careers, with significant variations across age groups.

Professionals in the 50–60 age group have the highest access rate in the sample, with 51.9 % of them reporting that they had secured mobility funding. The 40–50 age group shows a very similar profile (49.3 %), followed by the 30–40 age group (42.1 %). These three groups, which correspond to the intermediate and advanced stages of a professional career, also account for the largest absolute numbers in the sample and record access rates significantly higher than the overall sample average (43.3 %).

Graph 17: Access to funding for artistic mobility by age group

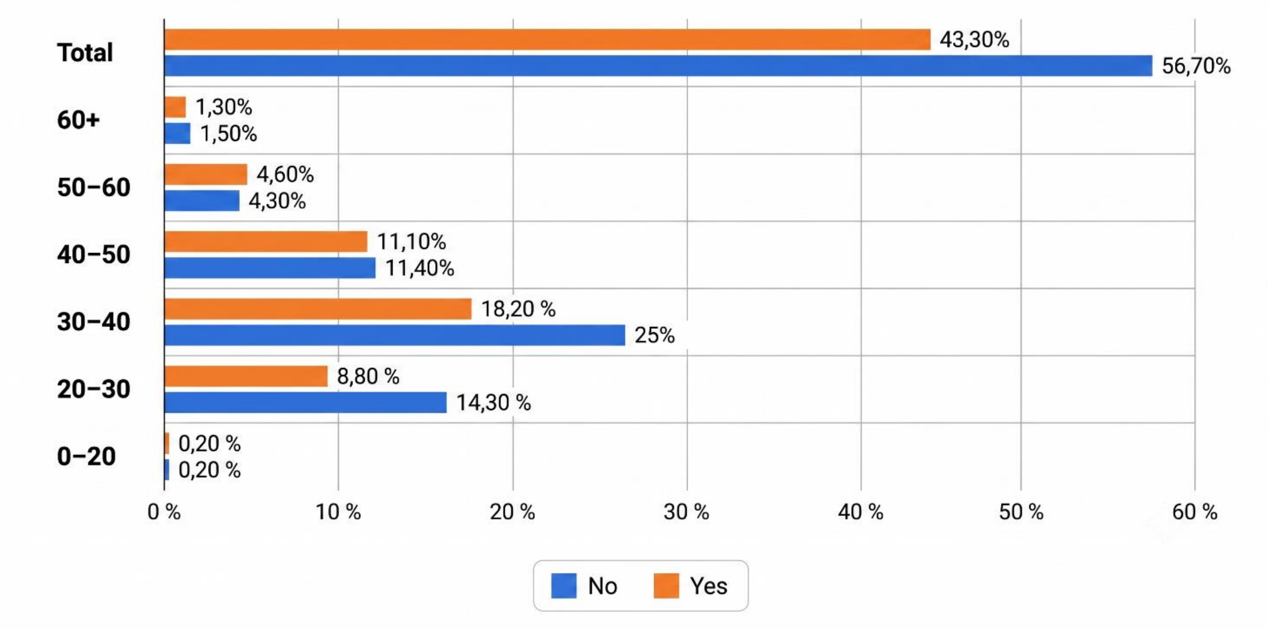


Table 3: Breakdown of respondents by age group and access to mobility funding

Age group	No	Yes	Total
0–20	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%
20–30	14.3%	8.8%	23.1%
30–40	25.0%	18.2%	43.3%
40–50	11.4%	11.1%	22.6%
50–60	4.3%	4.6%	9.0%
+60	1.5%	0.3 %	1.8%
Total	**56.7%**	**43.3%**	**100%**

Funded artistic mobility remains a phenomenon concentrated mainly among those aged 30–50, that is to say, the period during which professional careers are established and consolidated.

The 20–30 age group stands out for having the lowest rate of access, with 38.1 % of respondents having received support. This gap of more than 13 percentage points compared with the 50–60 age group illustrates a well-documented reality in the cultural sector : young professionals face specific barriers to access — less experience in seeking funding, professional networks still under development, and a lack of references or previous projects that might bolster the credibility of an application.

Mobility, although crucial in the early years of a career for building a network and accessing new markets, thus remains less accessible to those who need it most.

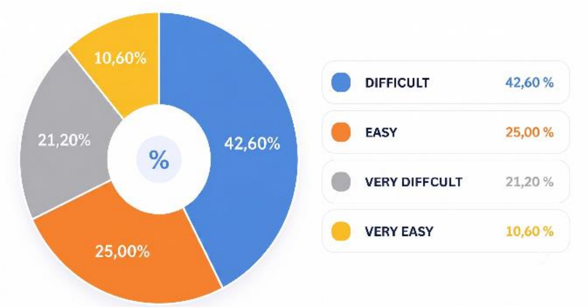
At the other end of the spectrum, the over-60s age group has the lowest access rate of all (1.8 %), although the very small sample size of this group (11 respondents) means this result should be interpreted with caution. It nevertheless suggests that mobility patterns change towards the end of a career, possibly due to a reduced reliance on formal funding schemes, or more frequent use of personal resources or informal networks built up over the years.

These results indicate that existing support schemes tend to benefit professionals in the middle and later stages of their active careers more, and highlight the value of developing mechanisms specifically tailored to young artists and cultural practitioners, who nevertheless constitute the pool from which the renewal of artistic practices and the long-term development of the continent’s cultural ecosystems depend.

3.2 Perceptions of the Mobility

The responses reveal a generally negative perception, with mobility seen as difficult:

According to respondents, 63.8 % rate mobility as difficult or very difficult, compared with only 35.6 % who consider it easy or very easy. The high proportion of negative responses reflects the existence of multiple barriers that limit the movement of artists across the continent. These obstacles mainly relate to:



Graph 18 : Mobilitys' difficulty perception in Africa

- **Administrative constraints:** complex visa procedures, a lack of clarity in regulations, delays and high costs.
- **Logistical limitations:** poor transport links between African countries, high travel costs.
- **Insufficient funding:** a mismatch between actual needs and available support.
- **Fragmentation of institutional frameworks:** a lack of harmonised policies to facilitate cultural mobility.

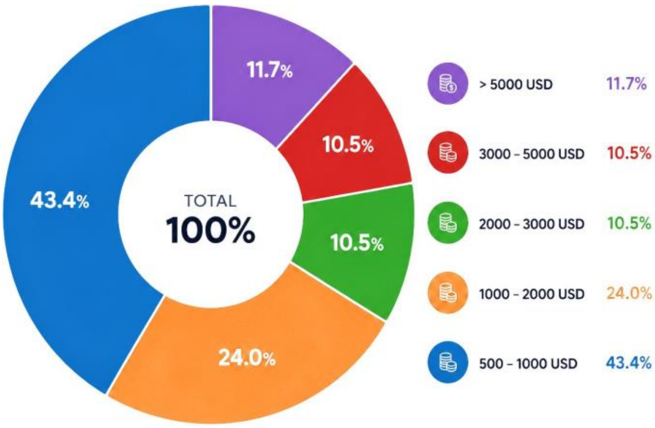
The second major finding arising from the analysis of this data is the existence of a significant gap between the reported provision of support and beneficiaries' perceptions. Although 51 % of respondents state that national institutions offer support for mobility, 63.8 % nevertheless find mobility difficult. This paradox confirms the finding set out in the previous section : the imbalance in the quality and quantity of provision and the mismatch between the support provided and the actual needs of artists and creative professionals.

3.3. Who Funds Mobility ?

An analysis of the objectives, types of expenditure and amounts allocated within the framework of support for artistic mobility sheds further light on the nature and scope of existing funding schemes. It enables us to assess not only the level of resources mobilised, but also the extent to which these resources are capable of meeting the actual needs of international artistic mobility.

3.3.1. A concentration in the lowest funding brackets

Analysis of the value of the support received reveals a funding structure heavily skewed towards modest amounts. Thus, 43.4 % of beneficiaries who received mobility support were awarded an amount of between 500 and 1,000 US dollars.



The US$1,000–2,000 bracket accounts for 24.0 % of responses, bringing the proportion of recipients who received less than US$2,000 to 67.4 %. The higher brackets are significantly less represented : 10.5 % for amounts between US$2,000 and US$3,000, 10.5 % for those between US$3,000 and US$5,000, and only 11.7 % for grants exceeding US$5,000.

Graph 19: Breakdown of mobility funding by amount awarded

This predominance of modest amounts must be interpreted in the light of the actual costs of intra-African mobility. A trip between two African countries generally costs between $1,500 and $3,000 in total, including air travel, accommodation, visa fees and a daily allowance. The fact that 67.4 % of grants are below $2,000 indicates that, for the majority of beneficiaries, the funding received covers only part of the expenses incurred.

This partial coverage forces artists and cultural practitioners to supplement their mobility budgets through their own means or other sources of funding, thereby exacerbating inequalities.

3.3.2. Significant regional variations

Graph 20: Value of funding by sub-region

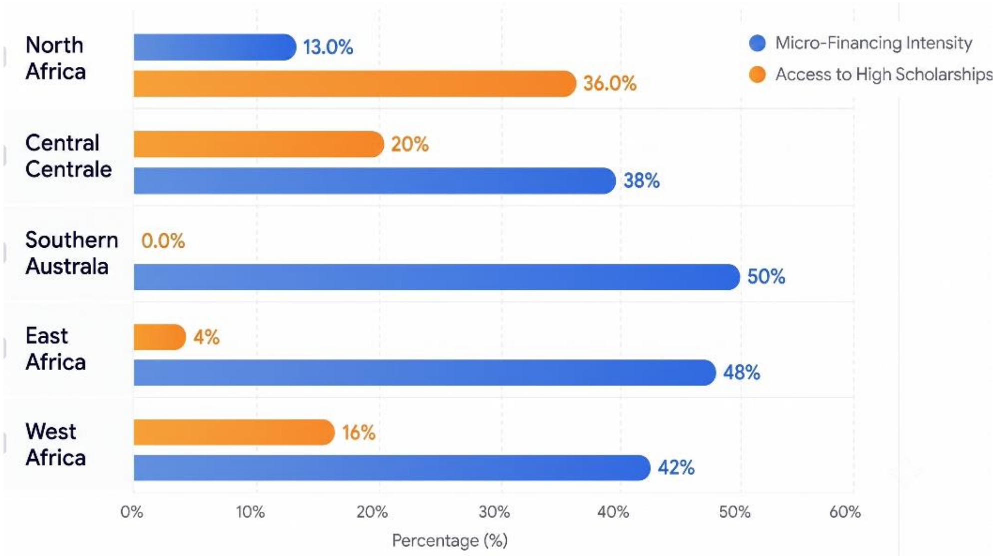


Table 5: Regional profiles of mobility funding by sub-region

Region	Micro-funding intensity	Access to High-Value Grants	Profile
West Africa	43%	High (17% in the $3,000–$5,000 bracket)	Diverse and ambitious
East Africa	48%	Very limited (4% in the 3,000–5,000 USD range)	Confined to micro-projects
Southern Africa	50%	Moderate (5% in the 3,000–5,000 USD range)	In line with the average
Central Africa	38%	Very high (20% above 5,000 USD)	Selective and ambitious
North Africa	36%	High (13% above 5,000 USD)	Balanced and diversified

East Africa : This region shows a high concentration of micro-financing. Of the total funding reported, 48 % falls within the 500–1,000 USD bracket, which is higher than the overall average. Access to substantial funding remains very limited : only 4 % in the 3,000–5,000 USD bracket and 8 % above 5,000 USD.

Southern Africa : This region mirrors the general continental trend, with 50% of funding in the US$500–1,000 bracket and a distribution similar to that of other regions for the higher brackets (5 % for US$3,000–5,000 and 12 % for >US$5,000).

West Africa : The general trend towards a concentration on micro-financing is partially confirmed. Of the 120 loans reported, 43 % fall within the 500–1,000 USD bracket. However, this region benefits from significant access to large loans : 17 % in the 3,000–5,000 USD bracket and 9 % above 5,000 USD.

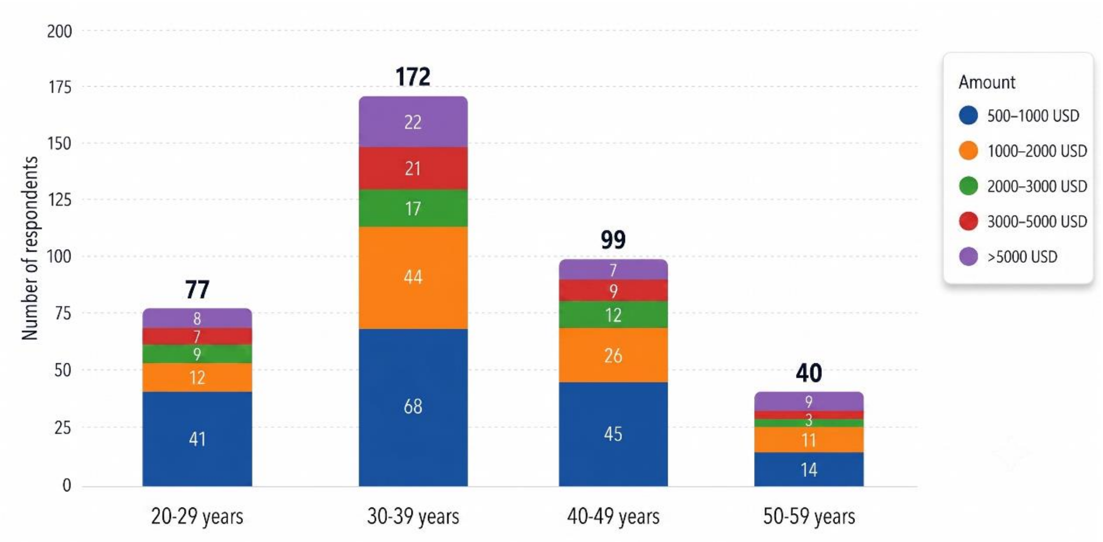
Central Africa : This region presents a markedly different profile. Although 38 % of funding falls within the USD 500–1,000 bracket (a proportion below the average), it has a high share of substantial funding : 12 % in the USD 3,000–5,000 bracket and 20 % above USD 5,000. This indicates that Central Africa, whilst receiving less funding in absolute terms, benefits from a structure geared towards larger-scale projects.

North Africa : This region is characterised by a more balanced distribution across the various funding brackets. It has a significant presence in the intermediate and high categories : 32 % in the USD 1,000–2,000 bracket (compared with an average of 24 %), 9 % in the USD 2,000–3,000 bracket, 10 % in the USD 3,000–5,000 bracket, and 13 % above USD 5,000.

3.3.3. A correlation between the amount of support & career stage

Cross-referencing the funding amounts with the beneficiaries' age groups sheds further light on the funding dynamics : the 30–39 age group is consistently the best represented across all funding levels, with shares ranging from 40 % (500–1,000 bracket) to 54 % (3,000–5,000 bracket). This finding confirms what had already been observed in the analysis of overall access : mid-career professionals form the core of the beneficiary population, regardless of the funding level considered.

Graph 21: Amounts of funding awarded for mobility by age group



Two trends deserve particular attention. On the one hand, the 20–29 age group is more heavily represented in the lowest funding brackets : 24 % in the $500–1,000 bracket, compared with just 17 % in the $3,000–5,000 and over $5,000 brackets. This suggests that young professionals not only have less frequent access to funding (as shown in the section : Participant profile), but also tend to receive smaller amounts when they do gain access, which further reduces their ability to finance a full international mobility experience.

On the other hand, the 50–59 age group accounts for a relatively high proportion of the largest grants (20 % for amounts over $5,000), which contrasts with their modest overall access rate and suggests that senior professionals who do secure funding tend to benefit from more substantial amounts, perhaps due to larger-scale projects or a more established application profile.

3.3.4. A quantitative and qualitative gender disparity

In absolute terms, men receive nearly twice as much funding as women : 259 grants (66 %) compared with 132 for women (34 %) out of the 392 grants recorded.

For women, 48.9 % of grants fall within the USD 500–1,000 bracket, and only 16.8 % exceed USD 3,000. For men, the concentration in the lower bracket is less pronounced (40.7 %), whilst 24.8 % of their grants exceed USD 3,000. This difference reveals that gender inequality in mobility funding is both quantitative and qualitative.

Graph 22: Breakdown of mobility funding amounts by gender (n = 392)

Gender	500-1000 USD	1000-2000 USD	2000-3000 USD	3000-5000 USD	>5000 USD	Total
Female	65	28	17	9	13	132
Male	106	65	24	31	33	259
Total	**171**	**93**	**41**	**40**	**46**	**392**

Women therefore not only receive less funding in absolute terms, but also have access to smaller amounts. With the majority of grants being under 1,000 USD, women are generally only able to fund short trips or small-scale projects. Conversely, grants to fund extended residencies, intensive training courses or large-scale collaborative projects are disproportionately awarded to men.

This gender dimension significantly alters the interpretation of the previous analysis. Whilst we previously observed that the 25–35 age group accounted for between 40 % and 54 % of funding, we must now recognise that this concentration masks a gendered reality: women in this age group are likely to receive much smaller amounts than their male counterparts, limiting their ability to turn their mobility into transformative career opportunities.

3.3.5. A sectoral hierarchy

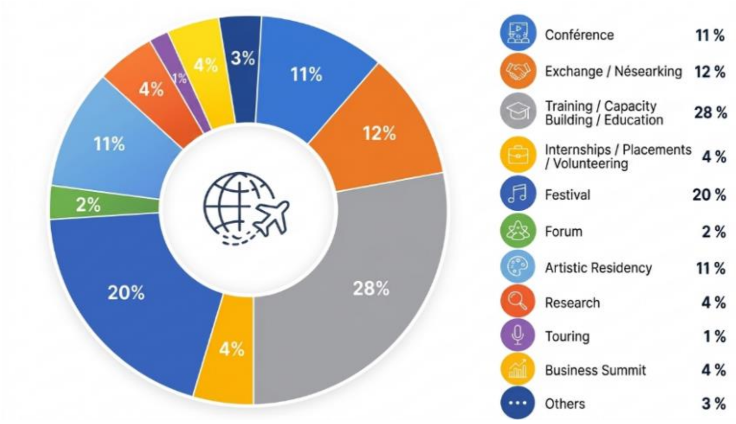
Graph 23: Distribution of mobility funding by sector

The mobility sector reveals a marked concentration of resources in a few sectors. The performing arts (Performance & Celebration) account for 48.0 % of funding. Together with the visual arts (18.0 %) and the audiovisual sector (15.5 %), these three sectors monopolise 81.5 % of the resources available for mobility.

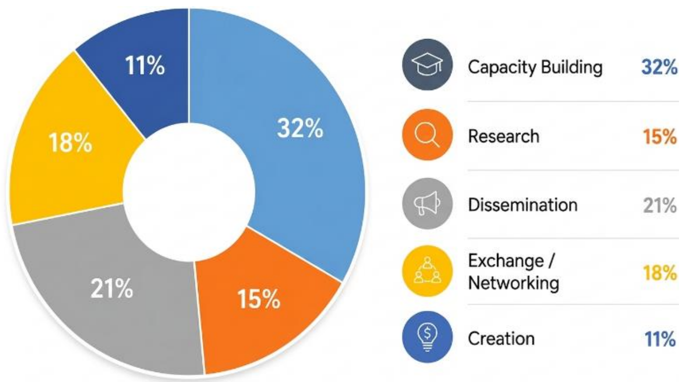
In contrast, entire sectors remain marginalised. Publishing and the press account for only 3.8 % of funding, whilst heritage receives 10.2 %. This hierarchy reveals an institutional conception of mobility that is heavily geared towards the performing arts and event-based dissemination, to the detriment of sectors requiring time, such as writing or preservation.

3.3.6 Funding geared towards dissemination and skills development objectives

Graph 24: Main types of activities funded under mobility schemes



Graph 25: Distribution of the main objectives of mobility funding



An in-depth analysis of mobility objectives reveals a clear concentration of grants around two main pillars, which together account for nearly 53 % of uses.

Firstly, training / capacity building / education, including work placements and volunteering (32 %, of which 28 % is for training proper and 4 % for work placements/volunteering).

This reflects a structural need to develop skills, but one that is met far more through short-term formats (workshops, training sessions) than through longer, more immersive professional placements.

The second pillar concerns promotion and engagement with audiences : festival appearances and tours account for 21 % of mobility[5].

This high concentration indicates that mobility is primarily used as a means of raising visibility and promoting artistic work, and as a tool for professional development and learning. Festivals appear to be key venues for the circulation of work, whilst training reflects a structural need for skills development.

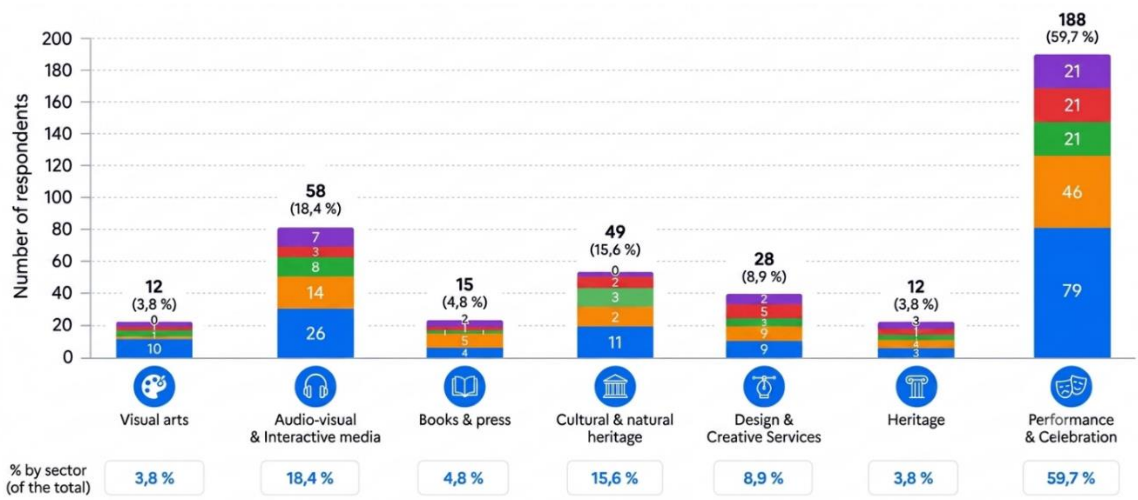
Next come networking, research and, finally, creation. When combining networking (12 %), forums (2 %) and professional summits (4 %), this pillar of global connection accounts for 18 % of uses[6] . This demonstrates that mobility is a strategic tool for integration into cultural ecosystems, essential for developing professional networks, establishing collaborations and becoming part of wider artistic circuits.

Research and creation share fourth and fifth place, with 15 % of responses for research/conferences and only 11 % for creation.

Mobility linked purely to research exchanges is limited to 4 %, indicating underinvestment in both long-term and short-term academic mobility. Mobility for artistic residencies accounts for only 11 %, revealing a significant gap for the essential activity of creative work. This demonstrates that in-depth creative experiences remain less accessible or less frequent than event-based mobility.

3.3.7 Intra-sectoral Structural Inequalities

Graph 26: Correlation between the cultural sector & the amount of funding for mobility



[5] Although touring involves a multi-date itinerary and a festival is a one-off event, both fulfil the same crucial requirement: the dissemination of works beyond their country of origin.

[6] The distinction here lies in the format: a forum or business summit provides a formal setting for macro-level discussion, whilst networking transforms these meetings into opportunities for direct partnerships.

Table No. 6: Sectoral profiles of funding for mobility

Sector	Total Funding	500–1000	1,000–2,000	2000–3,000	3000–5,000	>5000
Performance & Celebration	188	79	46	21	21	21
Audiovisual & Interactive Media	58	26	14	8	3	07
Heritage & Cultural and Natural	49	11	2	3	2	0
Design & Creative Services	28	9	9	3	5	2
Design & Creative Services	23	14	3	0	1	5
Books & Press	15	4	8	0	1	2
Heritage	12	3	4	1	2	2

An analysis of the correlation between sector and funding amounts provides an insight into the micro-ecosystem within a given sector. It also reveals structural inequalities:

- **Performance & Ceremonies** benefits from a more balanced distribution, with significant access to amounts above 3,000 USD. (This reflects group mobility)
- **Visual Arts & Crafts shows** an intermediate distribution, with a notable presence in the 1,000–3,000 USD brackets, but more limited access to the highest funding amounts.
- **Audiovisual & Interactive Media**, although fewer in absolute terms, benefit from a relative concentration in the higher funding brackets, suggesting that when this sector is funded, it receives more substantial support.
- **Books & Press, Heritage, and Design & Creative Services** are concentrated in micro-funding (500–1,000 USD), which drastically limits the scope of the projects they can undertake.

Implications for the African Cultural Ecosystem

This sectoral hierarchy raises several critical questions :

1- A bias towards the performing arts : The predominance of ‘Performances & Ceremonies’ (600 instances compared with 50 for ‘Books & Press’) suggests that funding schemes favour events and performances at the expense of other forms of cultural expression. This may reinforce a narrow view of culture and marginalise essential sectors such as publishing and the press.

2- Marginalisation of heritage and publishing : The virtual absence of support for mobility schemes for professionals in the heritage and publishing sectors is particularly worrying. These sectors play a crucial role in the preservation and transmission of African cultural knowledge, yet they receive only a tiny fraction of the funding.

3- Limited potential for innovation : Design & Creative Services, a key sector for innovation and creative entrepreneurship, receives very little support. This may hinder the emergence of a dynamic creative economy in Africa.

4- Reinforcing effects : Well-funded sectors (Performing Arts & Ceremonies, Audiovisual) have access to larger sums, enabling them to fund more ambitious projects, attract more talent, and consolidate their position. Conversely, marginalised sectors remain trapped in a cycle of underfunding.

3.4. What Expenses Are Covered?

Cultural practitioners who have experienced mobility were asked to assess the coverage of seven categories of costs essential to mobility, ranking them from 1 (easy to fund) to 5 (difficult to fund). This section analyses the hierarchy of cost coverage and its regional variations, revealing structural gaps.

Methodological note: Analysis of covered costs

Definition and population analysed : This section analyses the coverage of mobility costs for all respondents who answered the cost ranking question (N = 266–288 depending on the type of cost), regardless of their funding status. Unlike the previous sections, which focus on the 261 respondents who received formal funding or the 392 who received funding of any kind, this analysis includes mobility IN GENERAL, whether funded or not.

<u>Ranking methodology:</u> Respondents ranked each type of cost from 1 (easy to fund) to 5 (difficult to fund). The percentages presented in this section represent the proportion of respondents who assigned each rank to each type of cost.

Important: Totals vary by type of cost (266–288) as each respondent could tick several boxes or none at all for a given type of cost. This variation is normal and reflects the different response rates across categories.

<u>Interpretation of the rankings :</u>
- *Rank 1 (Easy to fund): The cost is consistently covered by the funding received or is inexpensive.*
- *Rank 5 (Difficult to fund): The cost is rarely covered by funding and must be self-funded or remains a barrier to mobility.*

<u>Coverage hierarchy :</u> The overall hierarchy is calculated by comparing the percentages of Rank 1 (easy) and Rank 5 (difficult) for each type of cost. Costs with a high percentage in Rank 1 and a low percentage in Rank 5 are considered well covered, whilst those with a low percentage in Rank 1 and a high percentage in Rank 5 are considered poorly covered.

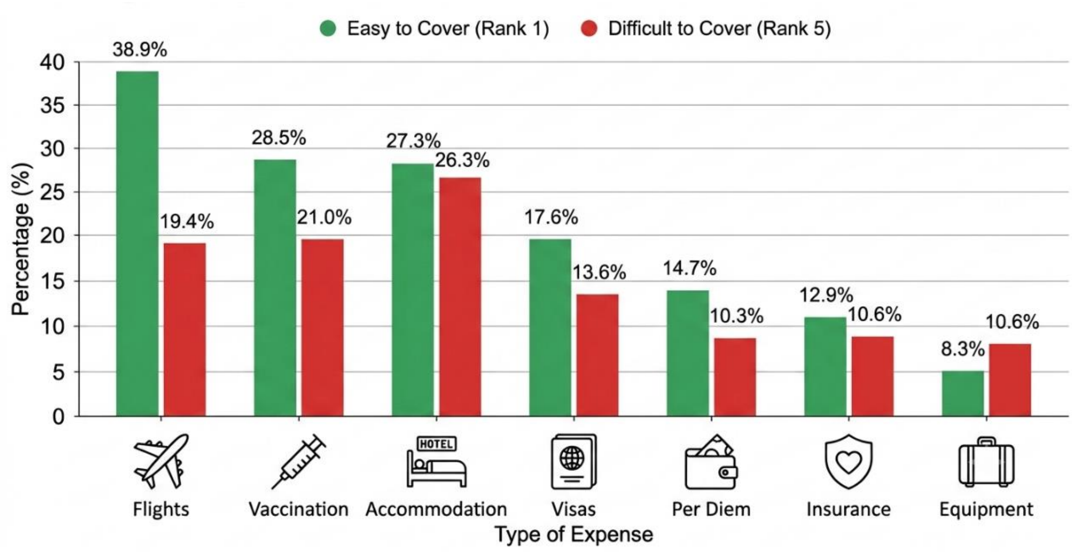
<u>Regional variations :</u>Regional variations are analysed by comparing the percentages of Rank 1 (easy to finance) for each type of cost across the five regions (AA, AC, AN, AE, AO). This approach makes it possible to identify the regions where coverage is better or weaker for each cost category.

<u>Limitations :</u> Sample sizes vary by region and type of cost, with some cells having very small sample sizes (e.g. Central Africa, N=14–18). The results for these regions should be interpreted with caution.

3.4.1. Structural gaps relating to covered costs

The analysis reveals a hierarchy in the coverage of mobility costs. Transport and healthcare costs are the most accessible, whilst administrative and living costs remain the most difficult to cover.

Graph 27: Level of difficulty in covering the main mobility costs



Most commonly covered costs (Rank 1 – 'Easy to fund'):

The three categories of costs that are most easily funded are:

1- **Vaccinations:** 39.1 % of respondents (104/266) rate this as easy to fund.[7]
2- **Flights:** 38.9 % of respondents (112/288) rate these as easy to finance.
3- **Accommodation:** 35.7 % of respondents (102 out of 286) rated this as easy to finance.

These three categories reflect the priorities of funders: compulsory healthcare costs (vaccinations), main transport (flights) and basic accommodation. Together, they represent the minimum investment required to make mobility possible.

Costs most difficult to cover (Rank 5 – 'Difficult to fund'):

The three categories of costs that are most difficult to fund are:

1- **Visas:** 29.3 % of respondents (82/280) classify these as difficult to fund.
2- **Insurance:** 29.5 % of respondents (80/271) rated this as difficult to finance.
3-**Vaccination:** 28.9 % of respondents (77/266) rated this as difficult to fund.

This polarisation is telling: visas and insurance, although critical, remain largely uncovered by funding. Vaccinations, despite being highly ranked as 'easy to fund', are also classified as difficult by 28.9 % of respondents, indicating significant variability depending on destination and funding provider.

[7] Vaccination costs are sinificant costs for intra-africain moblity.

Intermediate costs:

Per diem/daily expenses (28.6 % 'easy', 20.5 % 'difficult') and equipment/costumes (26.9 % 'easy', 24.4 % 'difficult') occupy an intermediate position, with coverage that is less systematic and more variable depending on context and sector

Regional variations:

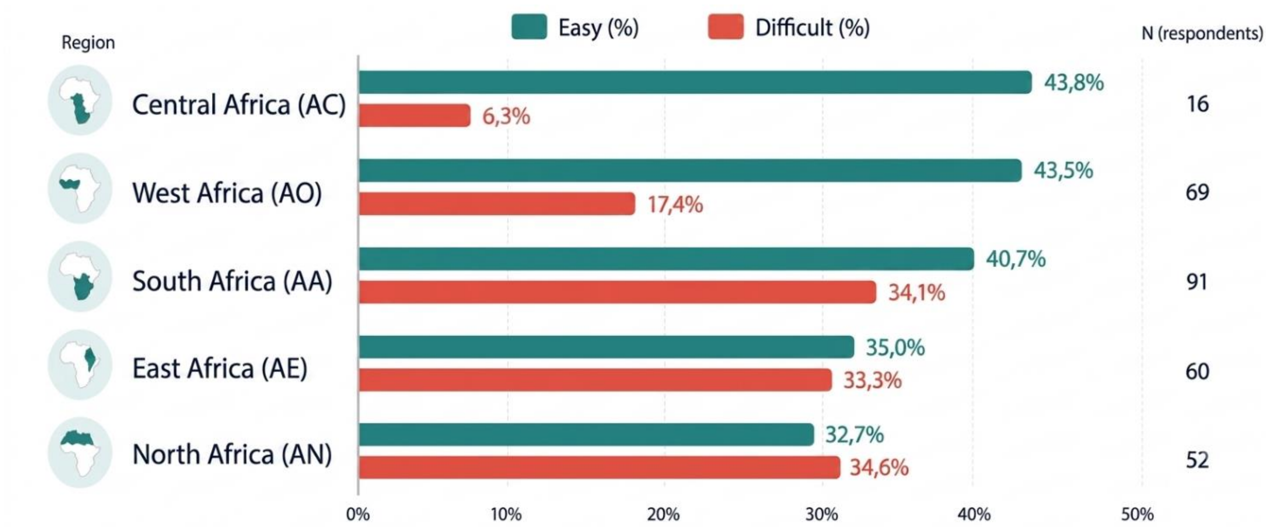
Regional analysis reveals significant disparities in the coverage of these costs.

Graph 28: Regional variation in the coverage of travel expenses

- Flights

Coverage of flight costs ranges from 32.7 % (North Africa) to 43.8 % (Central Africa) for the 'easy to fund' category.

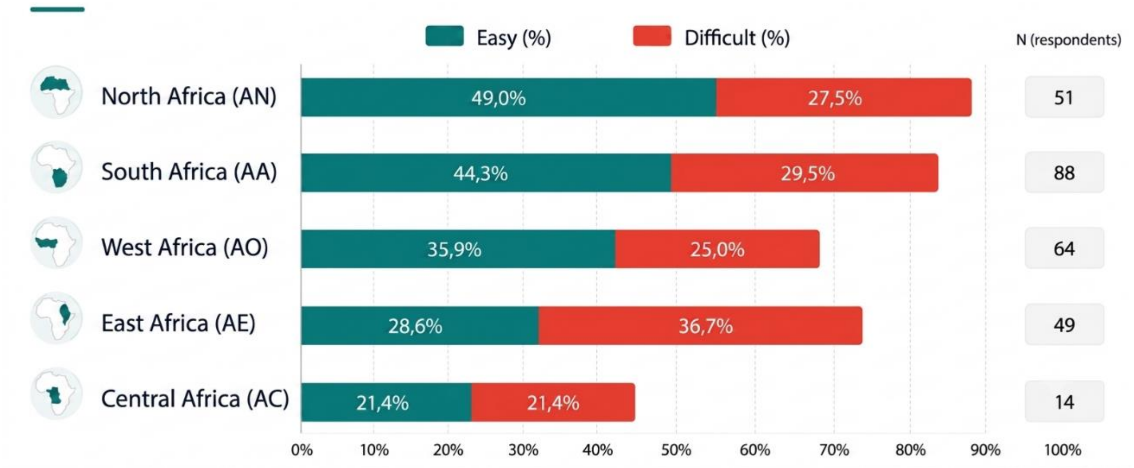
Graph 29: Regional differences in flight cost coverage



Central & West Africa show greater accessibility to flights (43–44%), whilst North Africa has the lowest (32.7 %), with a significant proportion finding flights difficult to afford (34.6 %).

- Vaccination

Vaccination coverage shows the greatest regional variation, ranging from 21.4 % Central Africa) to 49.0 % (North Africa) for the ‘easy to fund’ category.



Graph 30: Regional differences in vaccination coverage

North Africa has the highest coverage rate (49%), whilst Central Africa has the lowest (21.4 %). East Africa stands out for having a high proportion of respondents who find vaccination difficult to afford (36.7 %).

- Accommodation

Accommodation is relatively well covered in most regions, with rates of ‘easy to afford’ ranging from 29.6 % (North Africa) to 43.4 % (East Africa).

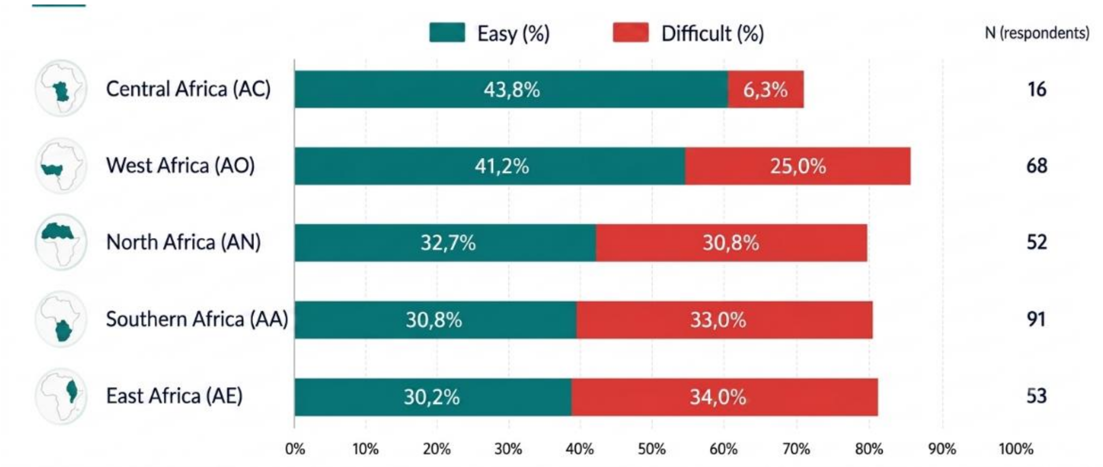
Graph 31: Regional differences in accommodation coverage

East Africa offers the best accommodation coverage (43.4 %), whilst Central Africa has no respondents who found accommodation difficult to finance (although the sample size is small: N=16). North Africa has the lowest rate (29.6 %), suggesting less developed coverage in this region.

- Visas

Visa coverage is generally low, with 'easy to afford' rates ranging from 30.2 % (East Africa) to 43.8 % (Central Africa).

Graph 32: Regional differences in visa coverage

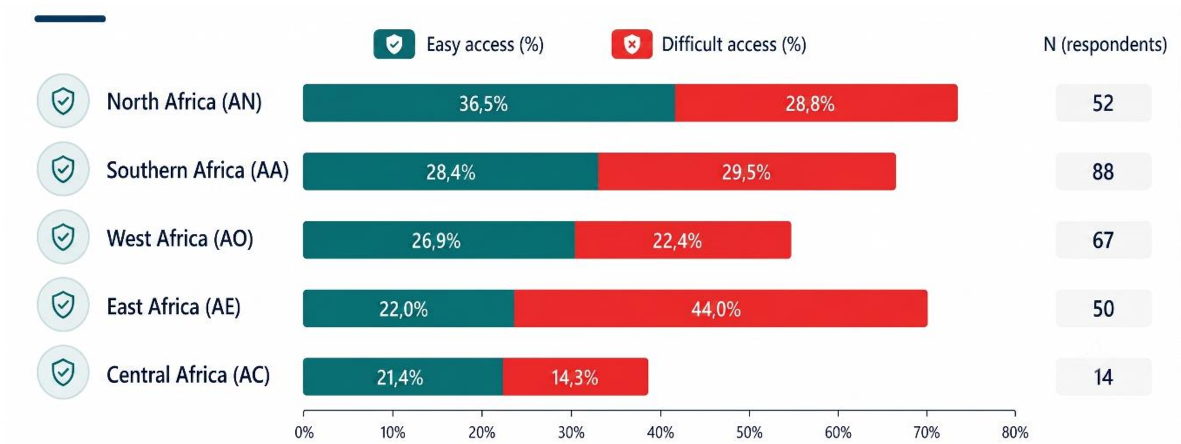


Central and West Africa offer greater affordability of visa fees (41–44 %), whilst East and Southern Africa have low rates (30–31%) with a significant proportion finding visas difficult to afford (33–34%). This disparity reflects differences in mobility policies and regional agreements.

- Per diem / Daily expenses

Coverage of per diem ranges from 22.6 % (North Africa) to 44.4 % (Central Africa) for the 'easy to afford' category.

Graph 33: Regional differences in per diem/daily expenses coverage

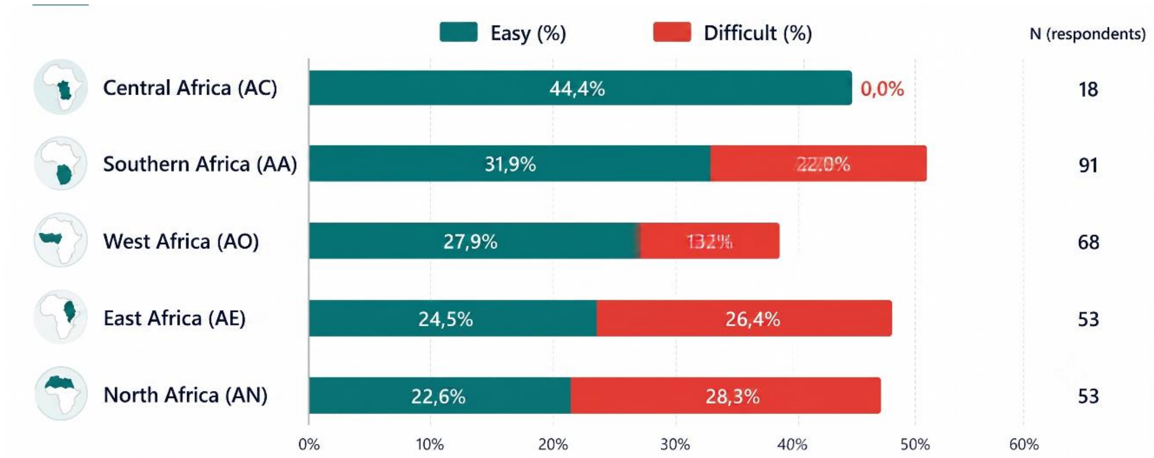


Central Africa has the highest rate (44.4 %), whilst North Africa has the lowest (22.6 %), with a high proportion finding per diems difficult to fund (28.3 %).

- Insurance

Insurance cover is generally low and highly variable, with rates of 'easily affordable' rates ranging from 21.4 % (Central Africa) to 36.5 % (North Africa).

Graph 34: Regional differences in insurance coverage

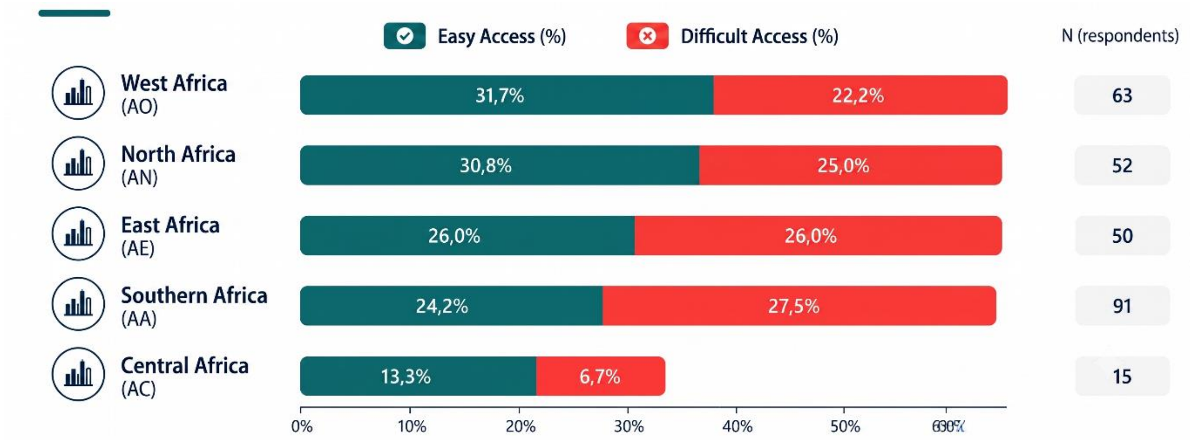


East Africa stands out negatively, with 44 % of respondents finding insurance difficult to afford – the highest rate of all regions in this category. North Africa offers the best coverage (36.5 %), but remains below 40 %.

- Equipment / Costumes

Coverage for equipment and costumes is the lowest overall, with 'easy to afford' rates ranging from 13.3 % (Central Africa) to 31.7 % (West Africa).

Graph 35: Regional differences in equipment coverage



Central Africa has the lowest rate (13.3 %), whilst West Africa offers the best coverage (31.7 %). This category of expenditure is the least standardised, reflecting the wide variability in needs across artistic disciplines and project types, but above all revealing a structural shortfall that is particularly detrimental to the African performing arts.

An analysis of the costs covered thus reveals three major structural shortcomings in the funding of artistic mobility in Africa:

- **Insufficiently covered administrative costs:** Visas and insurance, although critical, are classified as difficult to fund by 29–30 % of respondents. These mandatory costs, which are often overlooked by funders, represent a significant barrier for artists.
- **Partially covered living expenses:** Per diems and equipment, which are essential to the

quality of mobility, are covered by less than 30 % of funding (per diems: 28.6 %; equipment: 26.9 %). This insufficient coverage forces artists to self-fund a significant portion of their daily expenses and material needs.

- **Marked regional disparities:** Regional variations reveal a fragmentation in funding for mobility in Africa, with some regions (Central Africa, West Africa) offering better coverage than others (East Africa, North Africa).

Taken together, these findings paint a picture in which support for artistic mobility, whilst existing, remains, for the majority of beneficiaries, below the levels required for fully operational mobility. The concentration in the brackets below 2,000 dollars, combined with the low frequency of support documented in section 2.2.1, indicates that existing schemes often cover only part of the actual costs of international mobility, leaving artists and cultural professionals to bear a significant share of the funding burden themselves. This situation is likely to exacerbate the inequalities in access already observed, insofar as the ability to top up partial funding depends largely on the beneficiary's own resources.

The quality of support for mobility, assessed in terms of financial amounts, therefore reveals a fragmented and unequal landscape, where certain regions and demographic groups enjoy significantly better access to structural funding, whilst others remain confined to micro-funding that limits opportunities for long-term professional development.

3.5 Who Supports Mobility?

3.5.1 ANALYSIS OF NATIONAL SUPPORT

> *Beyond international funding, this section examines the quality and accessibility of the support for cultural mobility offered by national stakeholders. In the absence of official data and given the scarcity of open-source information, the main objective of this analysis is to understand the extent to which African artists and cultural operators have access to domestic support mechanisms, and how these contribute to facilitating regional and intercontinental artistic mobility.*

This analysis is structured around four key dimensions :

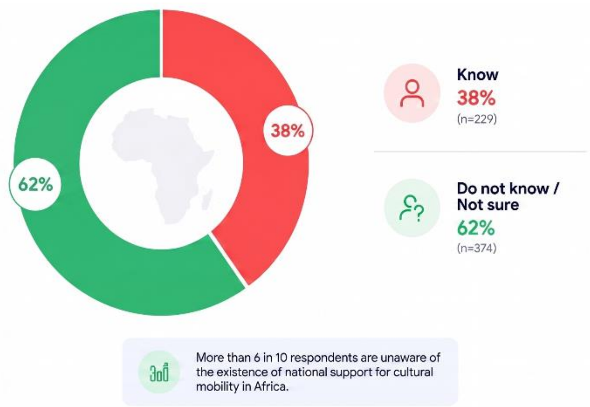
- **Awareness :** Are artists and cultural operators aware of the existence of national support for mobility?
- **Accessibility :** Do these national institutions actually fund artistic mobility?
- **The nature of support :** What types of support do these institutions offer (financial, logistical, networking, etc.)?
- **Perception of quality :** How do artists assess the ease of undertaking mobility in this context?

3.5.1.1 Limited Awareness of National Support

In response to the question designed to analyse awareness of the existence of local support schemes, nearly two-thirds (62 %) of respondents were unaware of or unsure about the existence of national support for mobility, compared with only 38 % who answered in the affirmative.

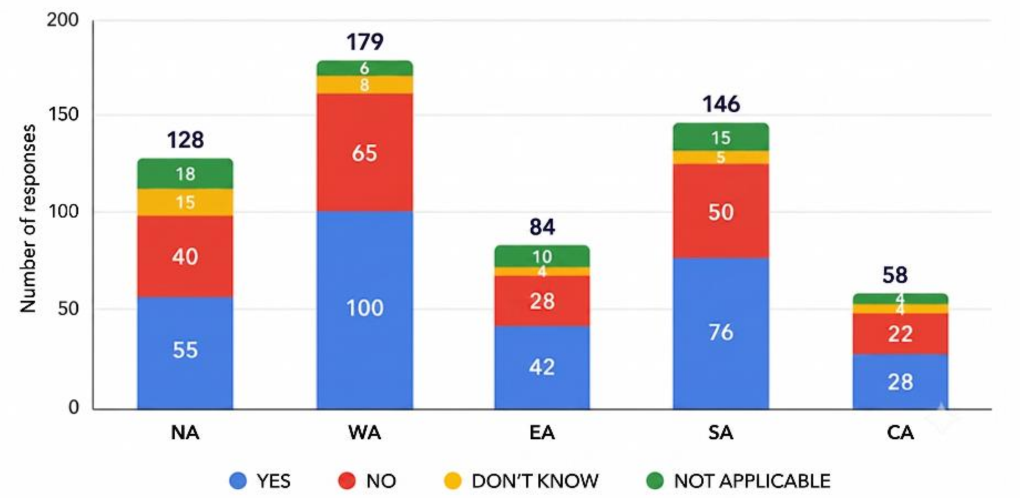
Aware of the lack of conceptual clarity and terminological precision amongst respondents, we reformulated this question as follows : ‘Do local institutions support the participation of artists and creative professionals in festivals, professional forums, conferences and training courses?’ and it was asked again later in the questionnaire. In response to this question, the overall rate of affirmative responses stood at 51 %.

Graph 36: Awareness of non-public national support



Graph 25: Local institutions support

Graph 37: Local institutions supporting artists and creative professionals by sub-region



This paradox highlights a problem of information and visibility. Beyond the possibility of a genuine lack of support in certain contexts, this observation confirms and underscores the well-documented structural weaknesses in the development of the cultural and creative industries in Africa, notably:

- **Low visibility of local mechanisms supporting mobility.** National public and non-public institutions that offer support do not publicise this sufficiently amongst artists and cultural operators, thereby creating a critical information asymmetry.
- **Fragmentation of support provision.** Funding and support exist in various institutional forms (ministries, foundations, local authorities) without centralised

coordination or communication, making access to resources opaque and difficult.

- **Shortcomings in governance and transparency.** These problems affect both public institutions and private organisations, and are exacerbated by limited capacity in terms of information management and the collection of reliable data.

Although regional disparities are evident, the overall imbalance between those who are aware of the support available and those who are not remains a dominant feature.

Graph 38: Awareness of national support schemes by African sub-regions

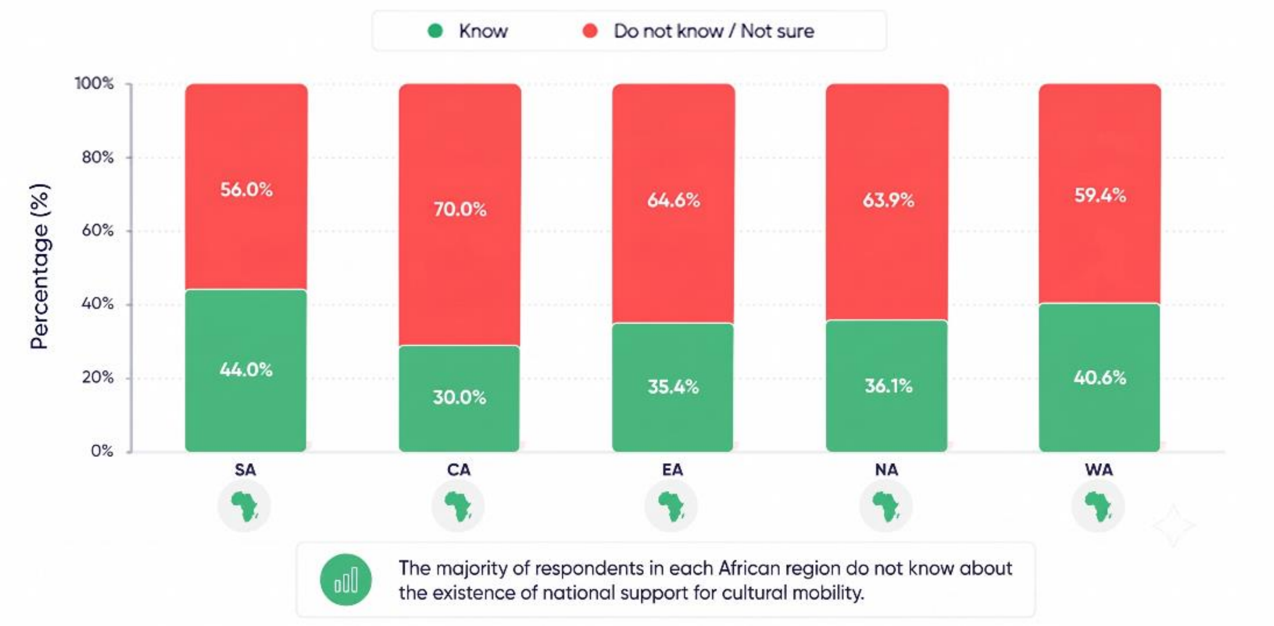


Table 7: Comparison of awareness levels of national mobility support schemes.

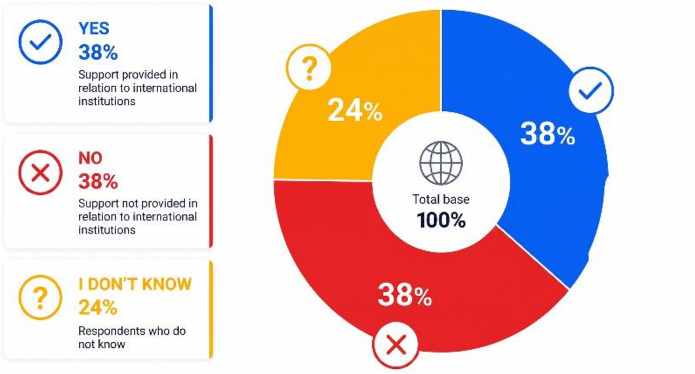
Country	Aware (YES)	% Aware	Not aware / Don't know	% Do not know / Don't know	Total
Democratic Republic of the Congo	9	39.1%	14	60.9%	23
Egypt	9	34.6%	17	65.4%	26
Kenya	8	25.0%	24	75.0%	32
Morocco	12	54.5%	10	45.5%	22
Nigeria	11	27.5%	29	72.5%	40
South Africa	17	53.1%	15	46.9%	32
Senegal	14	66.7%	7	33.3%	21
Tunisia	23	34.3%	44	65.7%	67
Zimbabwe	12	36.4%	21	63.6%	33

It is clear that the lack of data contributes to obscuring the actual contribution of local institutions to supporting mobility in Africa. However, it is well established that the majority of major national events (festivals, conferences, forums and meetings) are heavily funded by governments and local sponsors, and that they systematically offer mobility grants to their national and international participants.

In order to capture this aspect, we have included indirect indicators in the study. Whilst we are well aware of their limitations, these indicators nevertheless enable us to identify a general trend. We therefore formulated the following question : 'Did you receive mobility support from organisations other than international institutions?'

The results reveal that 38 % of respondents who received mobility support stated that they had been supported by bodies other than international organisations. This figure confirms the existence of a significant local contribution, which is often under-documented in macro-economic analyses of the sector.

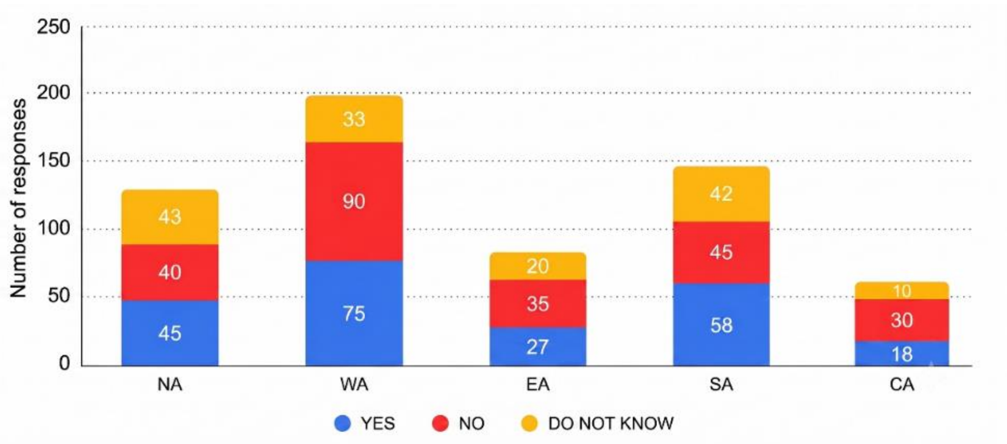
Graph 39 : Existence of national mobility support schemes



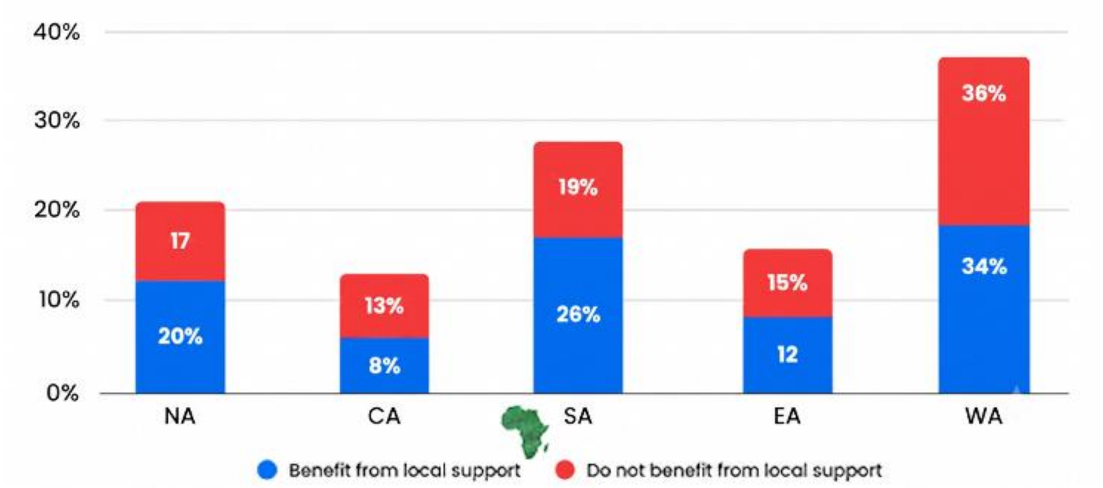
Although these responses do not allow for a precise quantification of the actual volume of local mobility support, they do confirm not only its existence but also demonstrate that this contribution is far from negligible.

This trend is confirmed at the sub-regional level, revealing significant disparities in access to local support. In some regions, notably North Africa and Southern Africa, access to local support exceeds that of international support. By contrast, in almost all other sub-regions, the gaps in favour of international aid remain minimal, calling into question the dominant narrative that cultural mobility in Africa depends primarily on international funding.

Graph 40: Availability of national mobility support schemes by sub-region



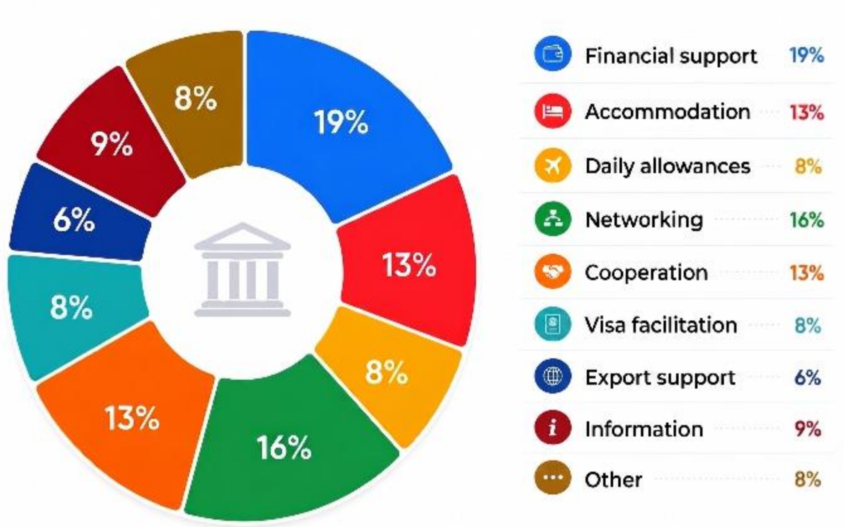
Graph 41: Regional distribution of recipients and non-recipients of local support for mobility



3.5.1.2 A Diverse but Unbalanced Range of Opportunities

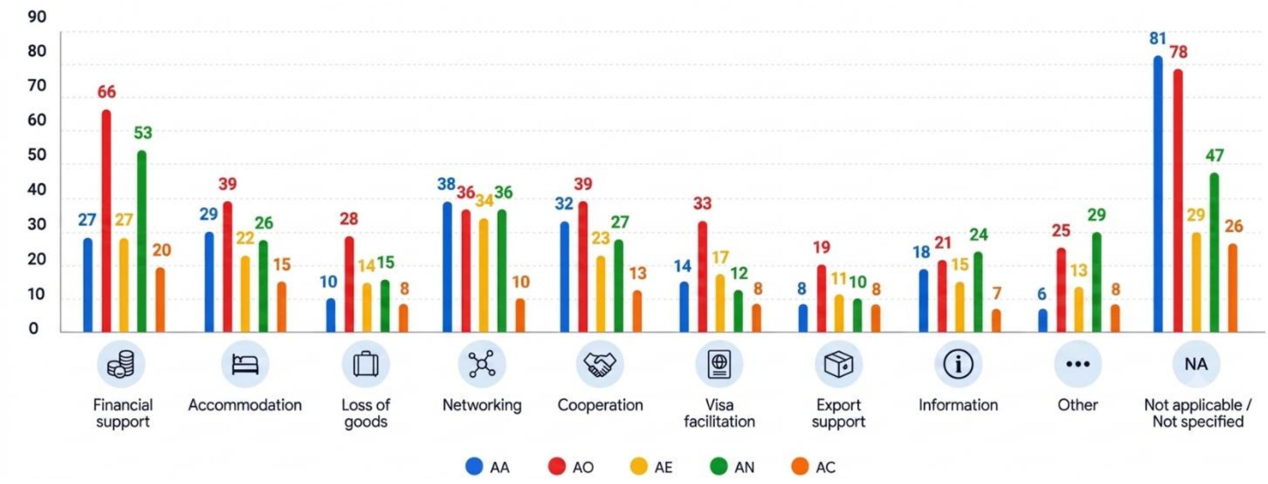
An analysis of the data on the quality of local mobility support reveals a diverse but unbalanced provision. Direct funding, networking, cooperation and accommodation constitute the four main pillars of support provision. There is a marked concentration on certain types of support: direct funding alone accounts for 21 % of the total provision. This dominance of financial support is accompanied by a near-total absence of complementary elements essential to effective mobility. Administrative support for visas, information and communication, as well as export support, remain marginal in the continental provision.

Graph 42: Types of support for mobility provided by local institution



Regional disparities exacerbate this structural imbalance. Southern Africa offers a range of support characterised by a particular focus on networking (38 mentions) and direct funding (53 mentions), whilst Central Africa offers limited support across all types of assistance (funding: 20 mentions, accommodation: 15 mentions, cooperation: 10 mentions).

Graph 43: Type of mobility support provided by local authorities, by sub-region



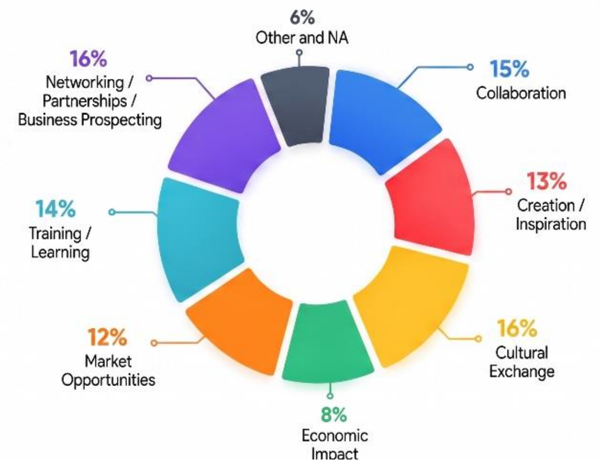
One of the major limitations of local provision is its inability to address the actual barriers to mobility. Indeed, although funding accounts for 19 % of mentions, it is not accompanied by commensurate administrative support : visa support is limited to 8 % of mentions, information and communication to 9 %, and export assistance to just 6 % of mentions. This imbalance reveals a critical shortfall in the provision of cross-cutting services essential to effective mobility.

3.6. The Benefits of Mobility

This section examines these benefits at two levels: the international level (mobility to Europe, the Americas & Asia) & the intra-African level (mobility within the continent). Whilst obstacles and barriers reveal what hinders mobility, the perceived benefits reveal what drives it.

The predominant benefits associated with international mobility are networking and collaboration, which account for 31 %, followed by training and creativity (28 %) and economic benefits (20 %).

Graph 44: Benefits of international mobility



Graph 45: Benefits of national mobility

The analysed responses, interviews and qualitative feedback highlight that the benefits of national mobility extend beyond the simple act of travelling. It is seen as a key driver for inclusion, economic development, cultural exchange, collaboration and the promotion of national heritage. Concrete initiatives aimed at facilitating this mobility are crucial for strengthening the cultural fabric across the country and for providing opportunities to a greater number of stakeholders. National mobility thus emerges as an important foundation for a dynamic and diverse cultural scene.

Several key advantages are attributed to national mobility, as perceived by the stakeholders interviewed; the most significant benefits and recurring themes highlighted in the responses collected are:

1. **Accessibility and Inclusion (as opposed to international mobility):** A key point is that national mobility is perceived as more accessible and inclusive than international mobility. It does not necessarily require long, costly journeys (such as by aeroplane) and can involve shorter, more frequent trips within the country. This makes it possible to involve a greater number of cultural stakeholders.

2. **Economic Development and Market Opportunities:** Domestic mobility is recognised as a driver of economic development, creating market opportunities for artists and cultural organisations across the country. It facilitates access to new audiences and new sources of income at a national level.

3. **Cultural Exchange and Diversity:** A major benefit highlighted is the promotion of cultural exchange between different regions within the same country. Despite an overarching national culture, there are significant local cultural distinctiveness. Mobility enables these to be discovered, fosters mutual understanding and enriches the national cultural landscape as a whole.

4. **National Collaboration and Networking:** Mobility facilitates meetings and collaboration between cultural actors (artists, organisations, institutions) based in different parts of the country. These collaborations can lead to innovative projects, the sharing of skills and the creation of a stronger national professional network.

The cultural and heritage development dimensions are also identified as major benefits of national mobility, going beyond purely economic aspects.

4. Mobility Practices

4.1 Mobility Flows

Moving beyond the quantitative measurement of mobility, this section examines mobility practices through four dimensions : Incoming and outgoing flows to identify trends and main destinations ; the continental and regional hubs that structure these flows ; the modes of transport used, which reflect access realities ; and, finally, the needs expressed (desired flows) and future preferred destinations of professionals. This multi-dimensional approach enables us to explore the mechanisms that shape mobility, in particular the influence of funding on travel patterns and the gaps between available provision and actual needs.

The analysis of flows is structured around three complementary axes based on the responses to the survey of 603 respondents:

Methodological note:

This section examines cultural mobility flows based on the experiences reported by 603 cultural professionals and artist across the five African sub-regions. Respondents describe their personal experiences and mobility journeys, without claiming to provide exhaustive or representative data on all mobility flows across the continent.

This approach takes into account several potential biases inherent in self-reported data:

- *Recall bias: respondents may omit or overestimate certain destinations, particularly those relating to mobility that took place some time ago.*
- *Social desirability bias: an over-representation of destinations perceived as prestigious, such as France, Germany or the United States, may be observed.*
- *Visibility bias: the best-known destinations are cited more frequently, whilst emerging or less publicised destinations may be under-represented.*

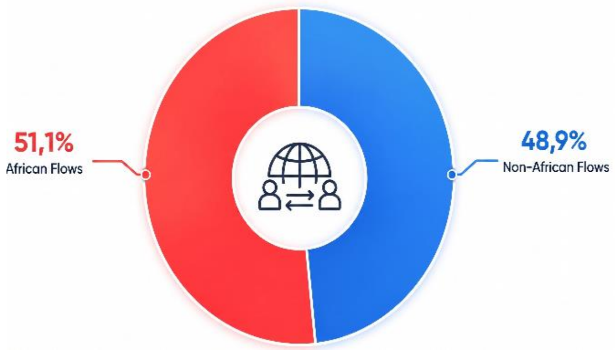
Our approach is therefore primarily exploratory and descriptive. It aims to document the main patterns of mobility observed rather than to establish causal relationships or test explanatory hypotheses.

- **Incoming mobility:** Countries from which artists, creatives and entrepreneurs arrive to work, perform or take part in residencies in Africa.[8]
- **Outgoing mobility:** Countries to which African artists, creatives and entrepreneurs travel to visit, work, create or network.[9]
- **Desired mobility:** Top destinations where respondents would like to receive support for mobility[10].

4.1.1 Incoming mobility

Incoming mobility to Africa is a fundamental factor in understanding the attractiveness of African destinations and the movement patterns of international cultural actors.

Analysis of countries of origin reveals a highly diverse distribution, with 2,497 mentions of flows spread across 1,111 unique flows linking 155 countries of origin to 36 African host countries. This diversity shows that Incoming mobility to Africa is not concentrated around a few major flows, but



rather distributed across a large number of specific mobility routes. African sources account

[8] Question asked to respondants : What are the " incoming mobility " countries (what are the countries of artists, creatifs, entrepreneurs that get to your country to work, perform, residency etc in a mobility program)

[9] What are the " outgoing mobility " countries (countries towards which to artists, creatifs and entreprneurs from your countries go to visit, work, create, connect etc).

[10] Mobilité désirée : List the top 5 countries/destinations you would like to have a mobility support program to.

for 1,279 mentions (51.1 % of the total), whilst non-African sources account for 1,218 mentions (48.8 % of the total). This near-parity indicates that incoming mobility to Africa stems in equal measure from

African and international sources. South Africa emerges as the leading source with 156 mentions, whilst France and Germany are the leading non-African sources with 150 and 114 mentions respectively.

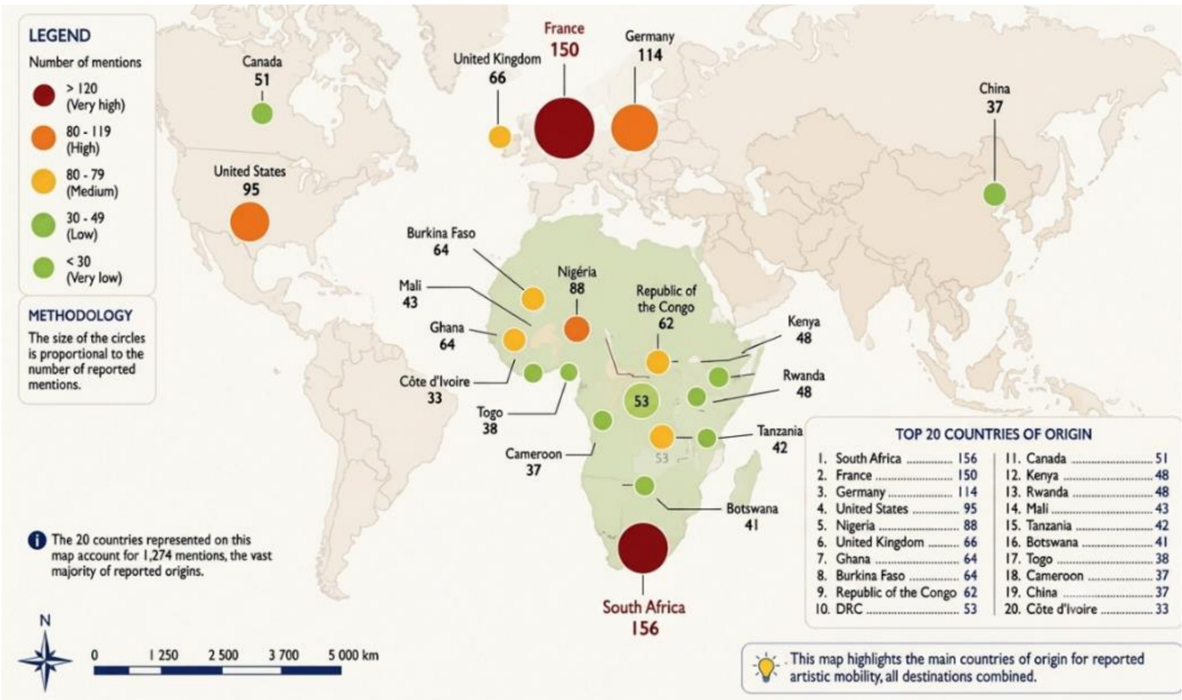
In terms of destination countries, Nigeria emerges as the dominant hub, attracting 303 mentions (12.13 %), establishing the country as the main destination for Incoming mobility. South Africa and Zimbabwe complete the trio of major destination countries, accounting for a combined total of 774 mentions, or 31.0 % of total Incoming mobility.

4.1.1.1 Distribution of Countries of Origin

The top 20 countries of origin account for 1,330 mentions, representing 53.26 % of total Incoming mobility. This moderate concentration indicates that Incoming mobility is well distributed across several major sources, with a significant long tail of countries making secondary contributions.

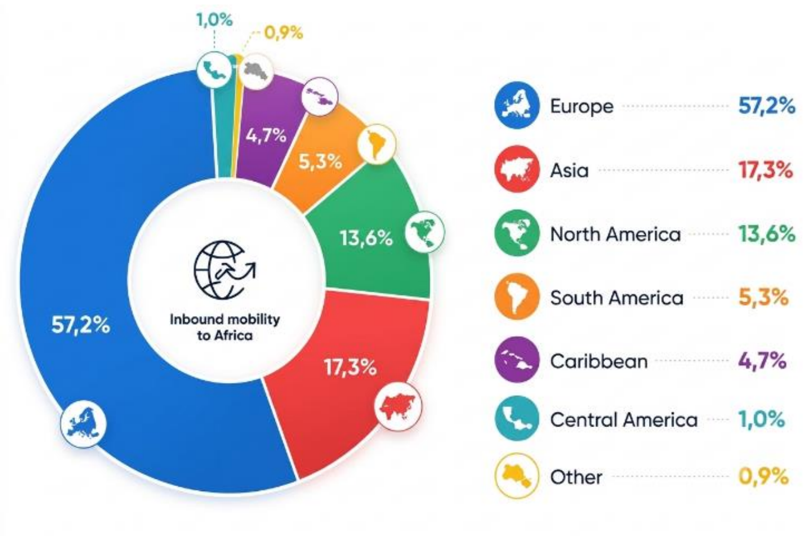
The top 20 countries of origin include : South Africa (156), France (150), Germany (114), the United States (95), Nigeria (88), the United Kingdom (66), Ghana (64), Burkina Faso (64), the Republic of the Congo (62), Democratic Republic of the Congo (53), Canada (51), Kenya (48), Rwanda (48), Mali (43), Tanzania (42), Botswana (41), Togo (38), Cameroon (37), China (37), Ivory Coast (33).

Map No. 1: Number of mentions of countries of origin for artistic mobility (Top 20).



African countries feature prominently in this list. African sources account for 1,277 mentions (51.1 % of the total), whilst non-African sources account for 1,220 mentions (48.9 % of the total), with fourteen of the top twenty origins, reflecting the significance of intra-African mobility. This establishes Africa as a major destination for cultural actors in both categories.

Graph 47 : Non-African flows by region of origin (Incoming mobility to Africa)



Non-African countries (France, Germany, the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada and China, etc.) illustrate the continued existence of close links between African cultural ecosystems and international networks. This pattern highlights the dual intra-African and international nature of the mobility dynamics observed.

China, the only Asian country in the top 20 countries of origin for migration to Africa, reflects the country's growing importance in African cultural life, linked to its increasing economic influence on the African continent.

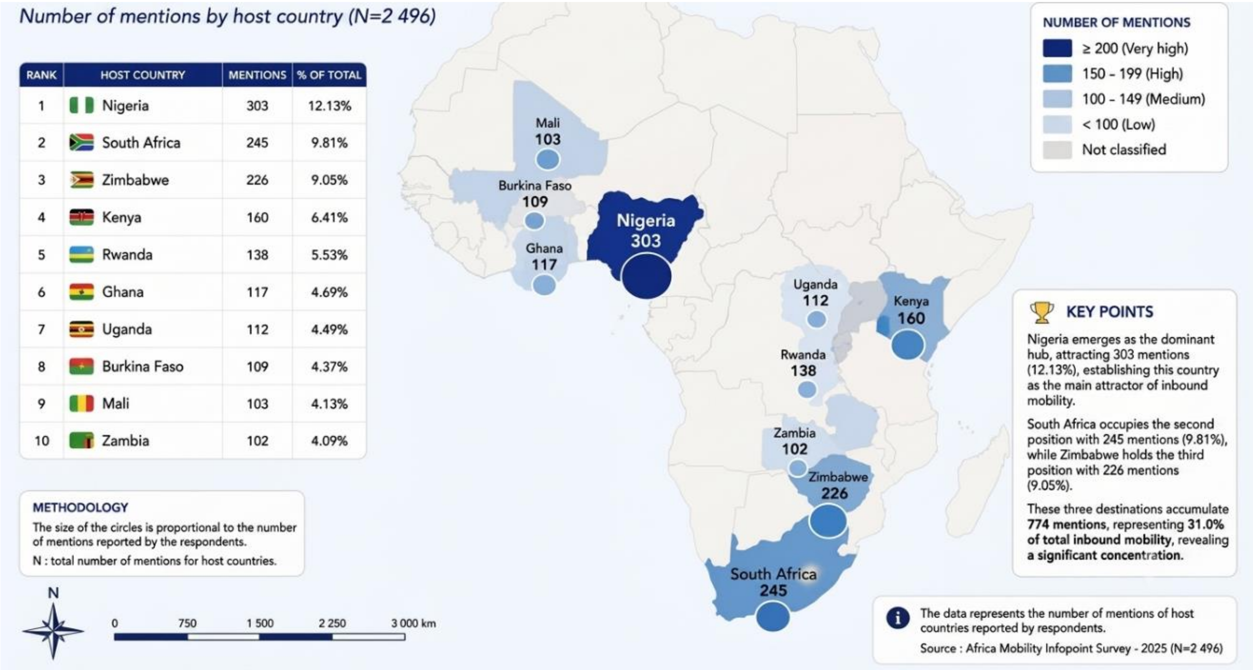
4.1.1.2 Major Reception Hubs

Analysis of host countries reveals a moderate concentration around major hubs, which are concentrated in three African regions: West Africa (Nigeria, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Mali), Southern Africa (South Africa, Zimbabwe, Zambia), and East Africa (Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania). This regional distribution shows that Incoming mobility is structured around major regional hubs rather than being evenly distributed across the continent.

4.1.1.3 Distribution of Host Countries

The top 10 destinations account for 1,615 mentions, representing 64.6 % of total Incoming mobility. This moderate concentration indicates that Incoming mobility is well structured around major hubs, with a significant proportion flowing to secondary destinations.

Map No. 2: Main Host Countries



The top 10 receiving countries include : Nigeria (303), South Africa (245), Zimbabwe (226), Kenya (160), Rwanda (138), Ghana (117), Uganda (112), Burkina Faso (109), Mali (103),Zambia (102).

Nigeria emerges as the dominant hub, attracting 303 mentions (12.13 %), establishing the country as the main destination for incoming migration.

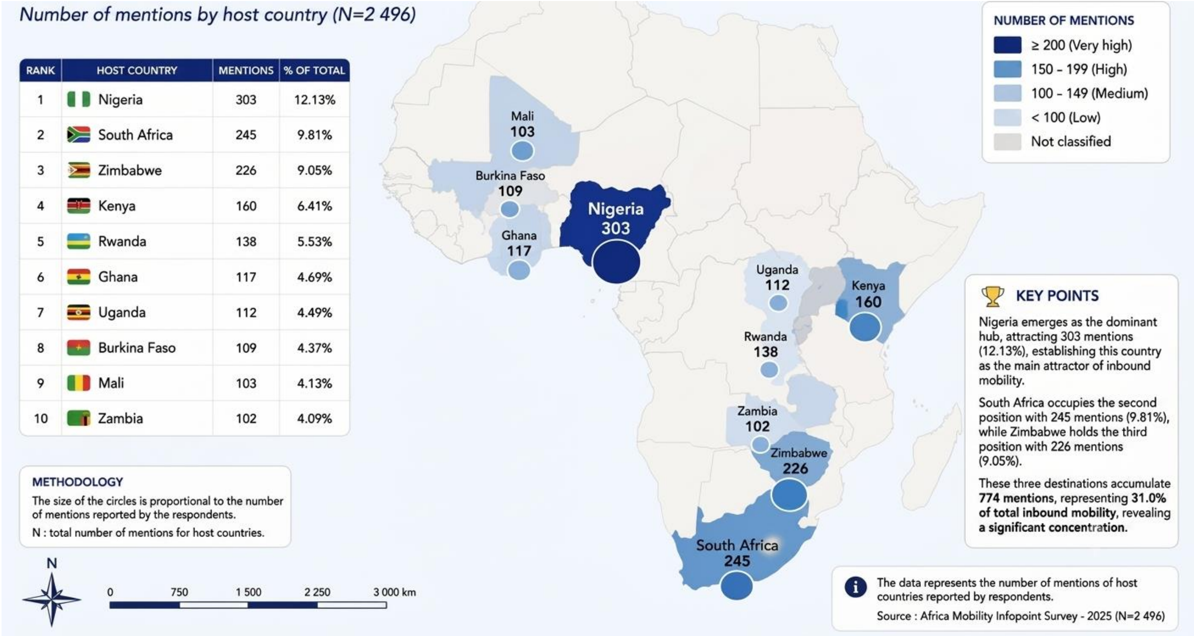
South Africa ranks second with 245 mentions (9.81 %), whilst Zimbabwe ranks third position with 226 mentions (9.05%). These three destinations account for 774 mentions, or 31.0% of total Incoming mobility, revealing a significant concentration.

Non-African flows

The 1,218 mentions of non-African flows represent 48.8 % of total incoming mobility. The regional distribution of non-African origins reveals a clear predominance of Europe, which accounts for 638 mentions (52.4 % of non-African flows), followed by Asia with 193 mentions (15.8 %) and North America with 152 mentions (12.5 %). This distribution shows that Africa mainly attracts European cultural practitioners, with a significant presence of Asian and North American practitioners.

Among the major non-African countries of origin, France emerges as the dominant source with 150 mentions (12.3 % of non-African flows), Germany ranks second with 114 mentions (9.3 %), whilst China ranks third with 37 mentions (3.0 %), highlighting China's growing importance as a source of mobility to Africa.

Map No. 3: Non-African flows of artistic mobility: origins and destinations



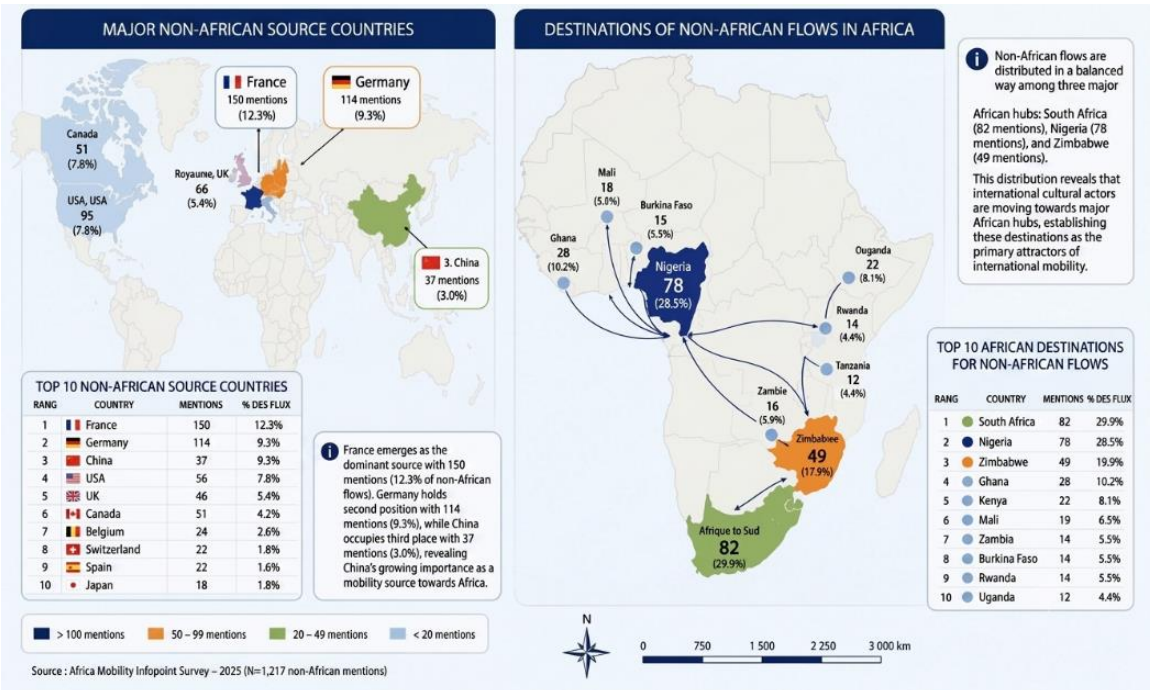
In terms of destinations, non-African flows are distributed evenly across the three major African hubs: South Africa (82 mentions), Nigeria (78 mentions) and Zimbabwe (49 mentions). This distribution reveals that international cultural actors are moving towards the major African hubs, establishing these destinations as the main magnets for international mobility

4.1.1.4 Hubs of origin for Incoming mobility

Europe: The Major Hub

Europe accounts for 638 mentions, establishing the continent as the major source of incoming mobility. This predominance highlights the enduring importance of cultural and economic ties between Europe and Africa, as well as Africa's appeal to European cultural actors.

Map No. 4: European Flows to Africa



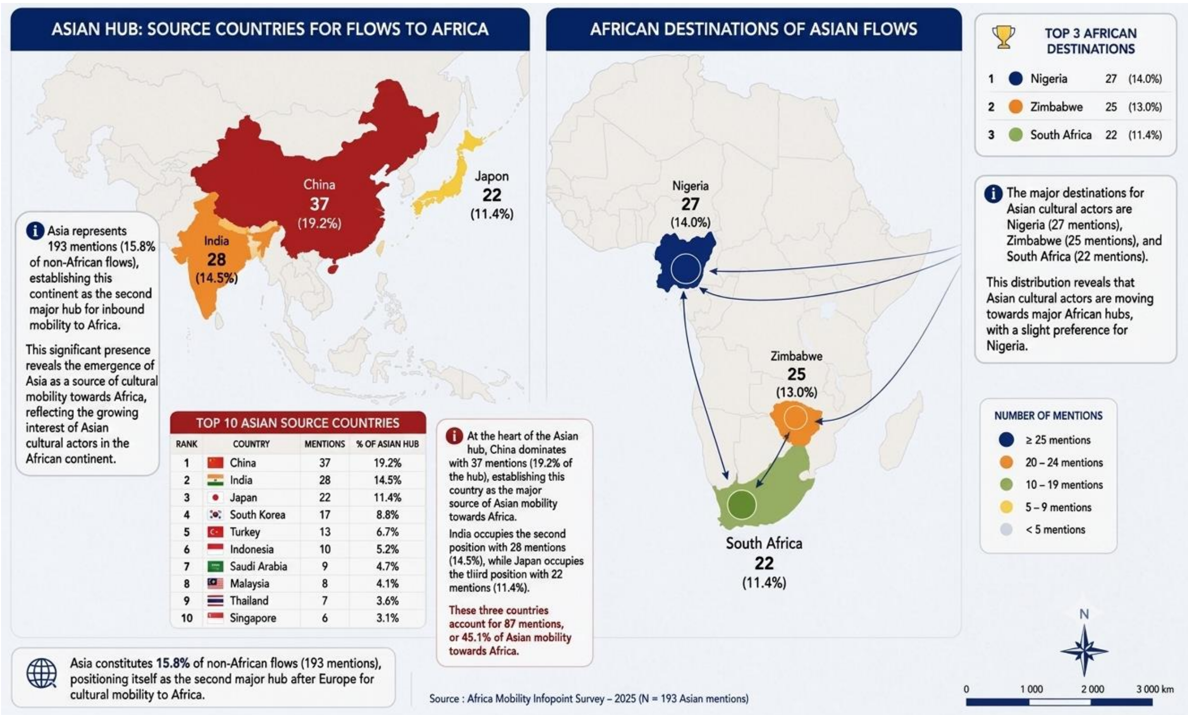
Within the European hub, France dominates by a wide margin with 150 mentions (23.5 % of the hub), establishing the country as the major source of cultural mobility to Africa. Germany ranks second with 114 mentions (17.9 %), whilst the United Kingdom ranks third with 66 mentions (10.3 %). These three countries account for a total of 330 mentions, representing 51.7 % of European mobility to Africa.

The main destinations for European cultural actors are South Africa (82 mentions), Nigeria (78 mentions) and Zimbabwe (49 mentions). This distribution reveals that European cultural actors are concentrated in the three major African hubs, with a slight preference for South Africa and Nigeria.

Asia: The Emerging Hub

Asia accounts for 193 mentions (15.8 % of non-African flows), establishing the continent as the second major hub for incoming mobility to Africa. This significant presence highlights Asia's emergence as a source of cultural mobility to Africa, reflecting the growing interest of Asian cultural actors in the African continent.

Map No. 5: Asian Flows to Africa



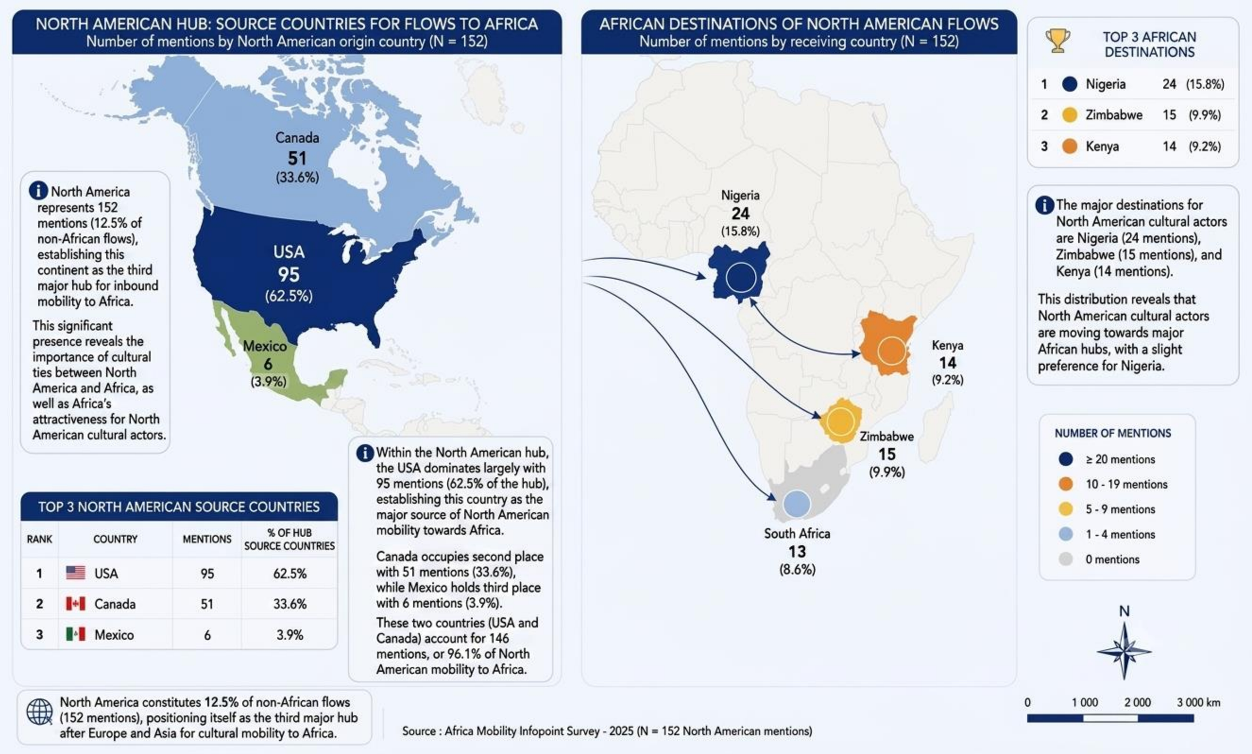
Within the Asian hub, China dominates with 37 mentions (19.2 % of the hub). India ranks second with 28 mentions (14.5 %), whilst Japan ranks third with 22 mentions (11.4 %). These three countries account for a combined total of 87 mentions, representing 45.1 % of Asian mobility to Africa.

The main destinations for Asian cultural actors are Nigeria (27 mentions), Zimbabwe (25 mentions) and South Africa (22 mentions). This distribution reveals that Asian cultural actors also focus on the three major African hubs, with a slight preference for Nigeria.

North America: The Secondary Hub

North America accounts for 152 mentions (12.5 % of non-African flows), establishing the continent as the third major hub for Incoming mobility to Africa. This significant presence highlights the importance of cultural links between North America and Africa, as well as Africa's appeal to North American cultural actors.

Map No. 6: Flows from North America to Africa



Within the North American hub, the United States dominates by a wide margin with 95 mentions (62.5% of the hub), establishing the country as the main source of North American mobility to Africa. Canada ranks second with 51 mentions (33.6%), whilst Mexico ranks third with just 6 mentions (3.9%).

The main destinations for North American cultural actors are Nigeria (24 mentions), Zimbabwe (15 mentions) and Kenya (14 mentions). This distribution reveals that North American cultural actors also focus on the three major African hubs, with a slight preference for Nigeria.

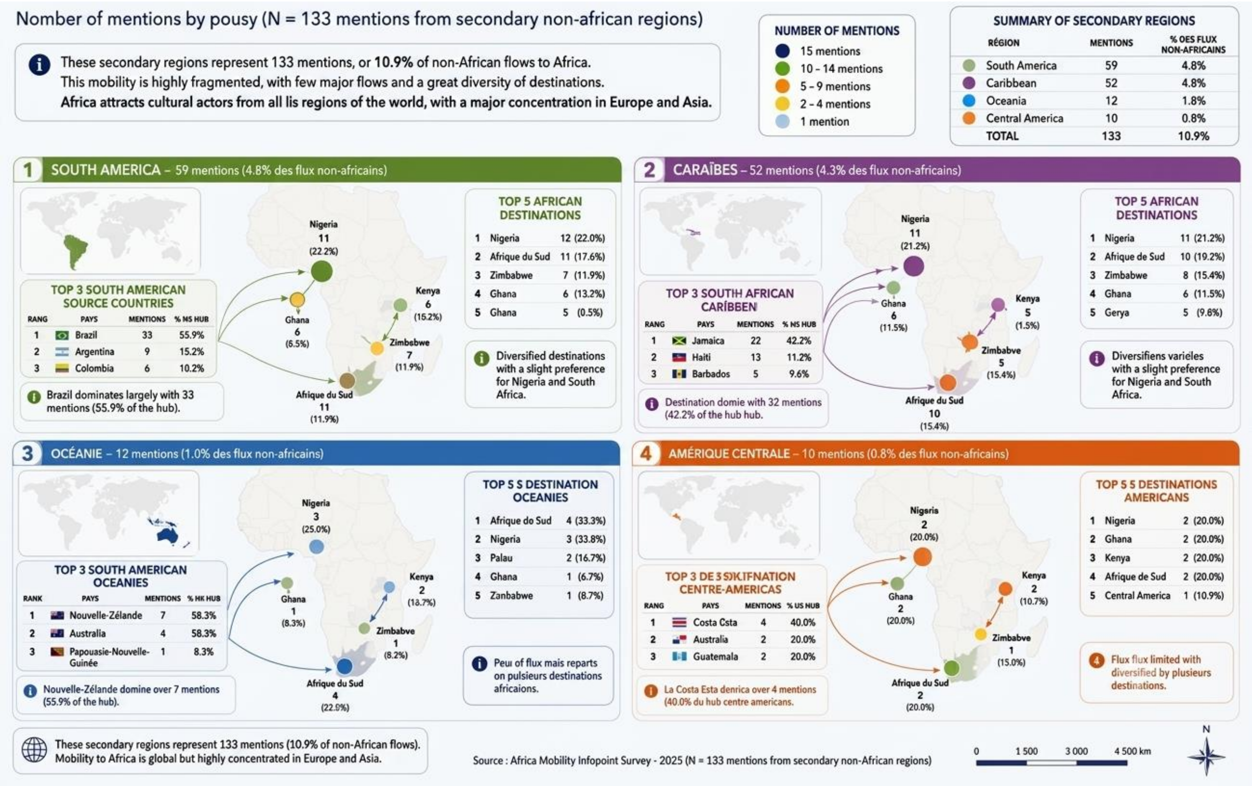
Other Regions

South America accounts for 59 mentions (4.8 % of non-African flows), with Brazil dominating by a wide margin with 33 mentions (55.9 % of the South American hub).

The Caribbean accounts for 52 mentions (4.3 % of non-African flows), with Jamaica dominating with 22 mentions (42.3 % of the Caribbean hub). Oceania accounts for only 12 mentions (1.0 % of non-African flows), with New Zealand dominating with 7 mentions (58.3

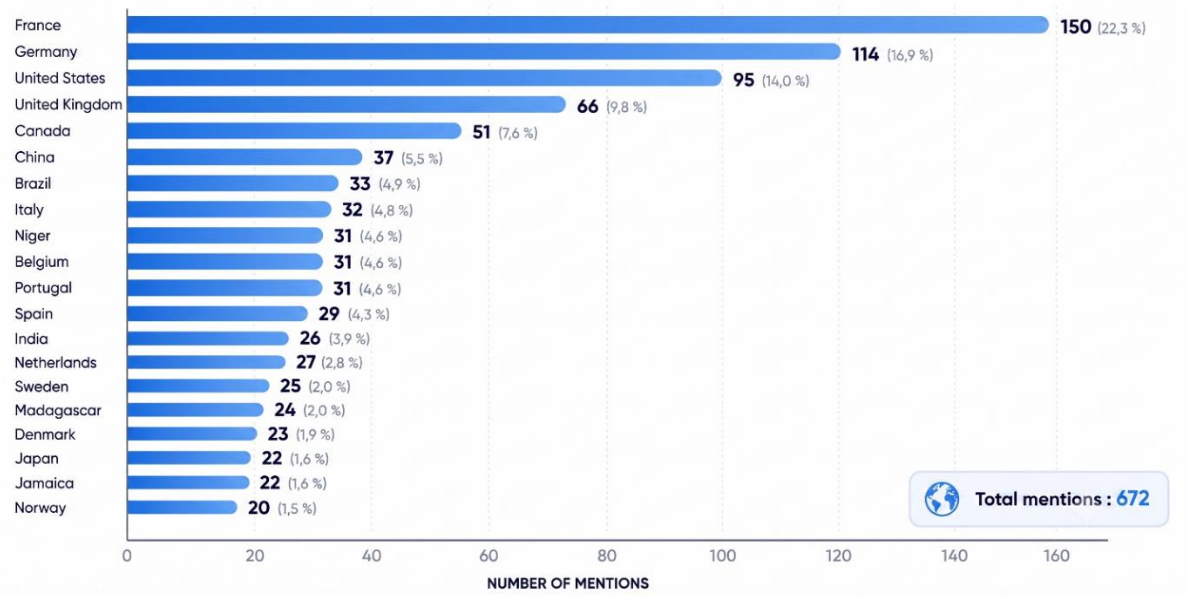
% of the Oceanian hub). Central America accounts for just 10 mentions (0.8 % of non-African flows), with Costa Rica leading the way with 4 mentions (40.0 % of the Central American hub).

Map No. 7: Flows from secondary regions to Africa

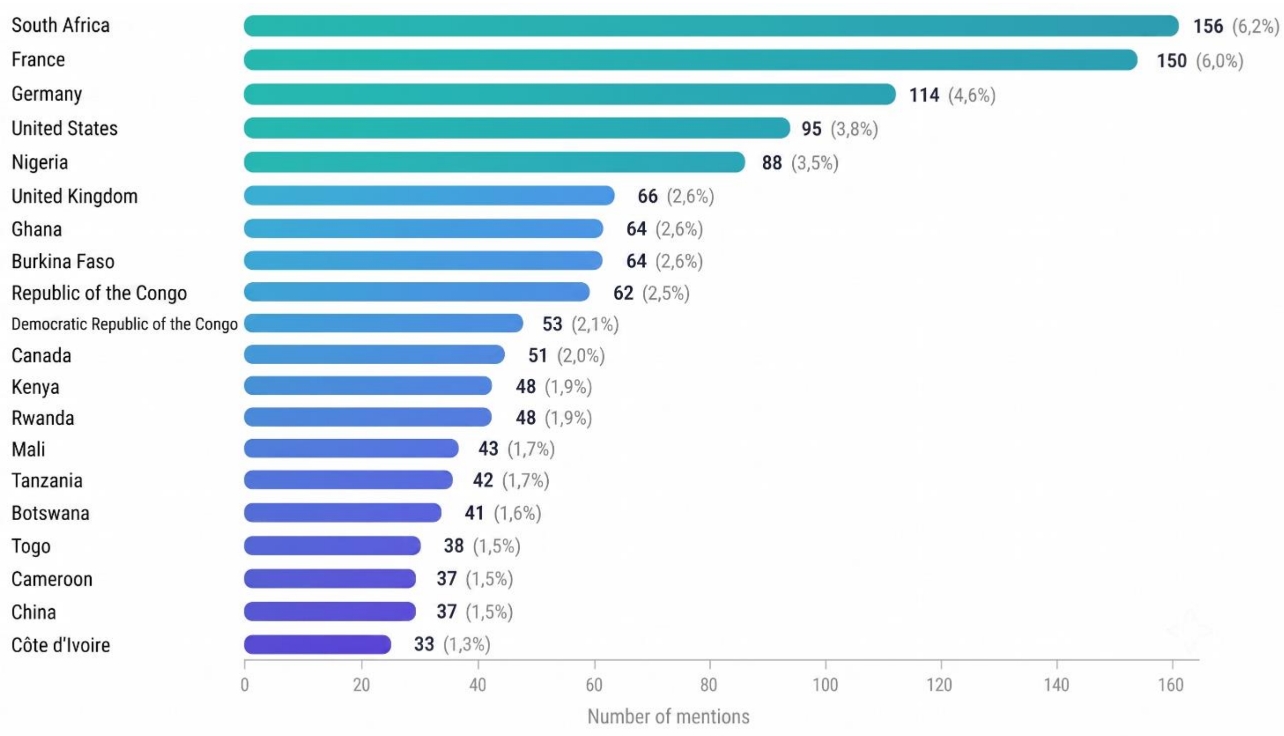


These secondary regions reveal highly fragmented mobility towards Africa, with few major flows and a wide variety of destinations. This fragmentation highlights Africa's appeal to cultural actors from all regions of the world, though with a major concentration in Europe and Asia.

Graph No. 48: Top 20 non-African countries of origin (Incoming mobility to Africa)



Graph 49: Top 20 countries of origin (Incoming mobility to Africa)



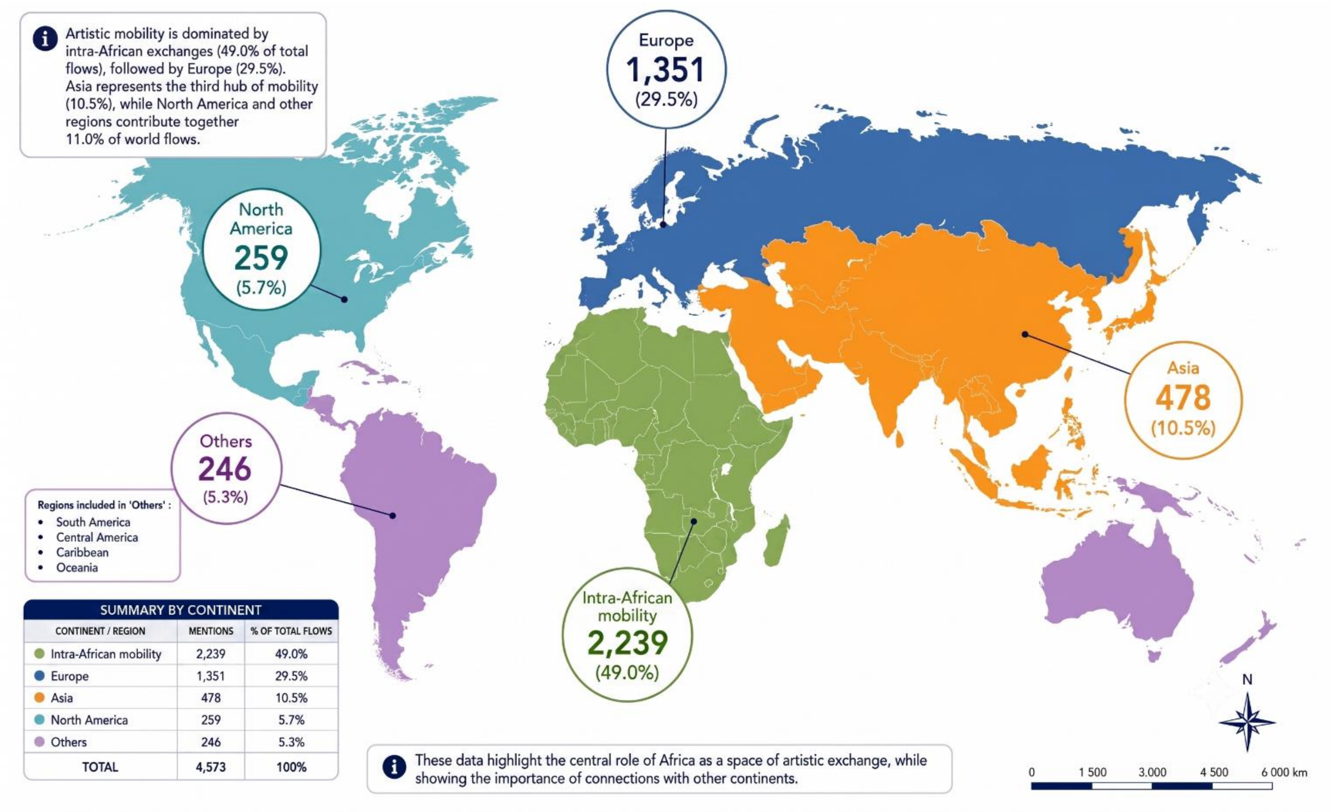
4.1.2 Outgoing Mobility

The study reveals a complex and nuanced mobility structure that combines highly significant African regional dynamics with a focus on major international hubs. The data analysed covers 4,573 mentions spread across 169 destinations, providing a comprehensive overview of the mobility patterns of African creatives.

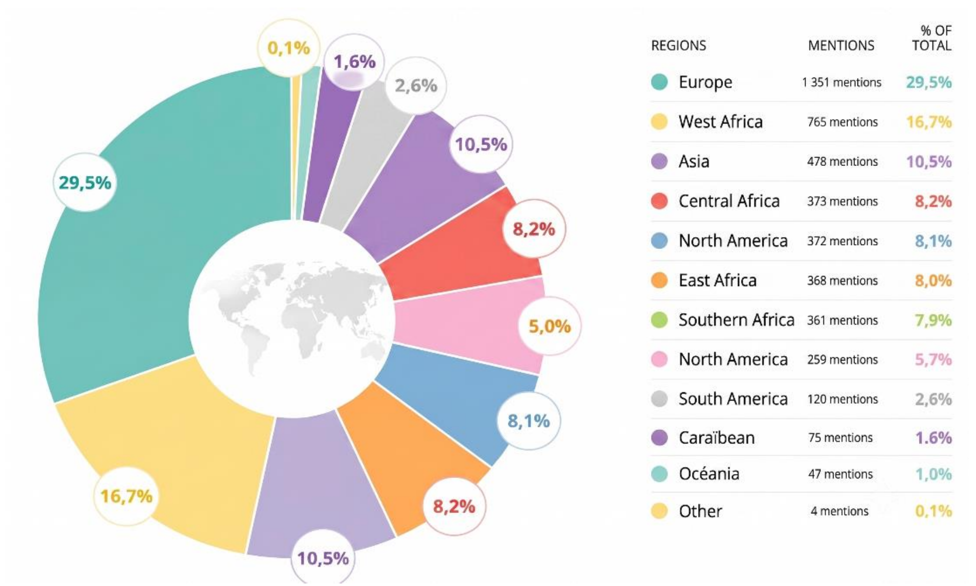
The most striking observation concerns the near-perfect balance between intra-African mobility – which accounts for 49.0 % of total mobility with 2,239 mentions – and extra-African mobility, which accounts for 51.0 % with 2,334 mentions.

This balance reveals a regional dynamic within Africa that is far more significant than conventional perceptions would suggest. At the same time, the moderate concentration around major hubs – with the top 20 destinations accounting for 50.1 % of the total – indicates a structured but not excessively concentrated pattern of mobility.

Map No 8: Distribution of international flows

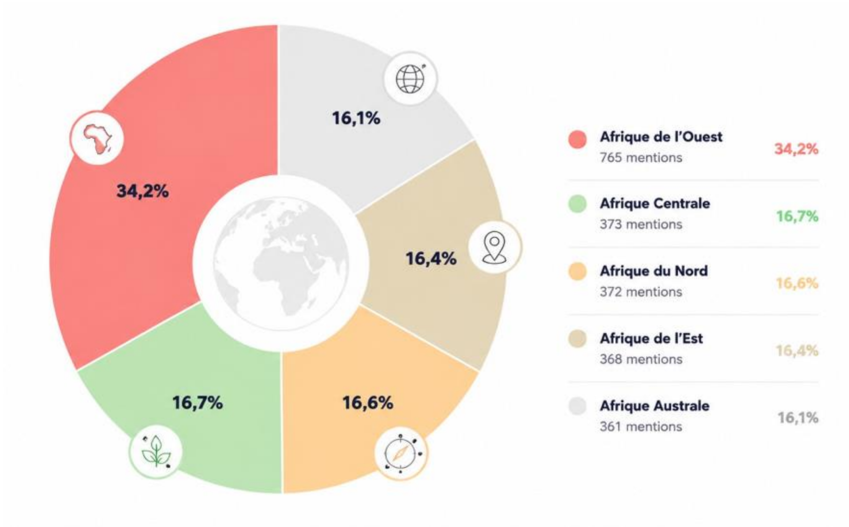


Graph 50: Distribution of outgoing mobility by continent (4,573 mentions)



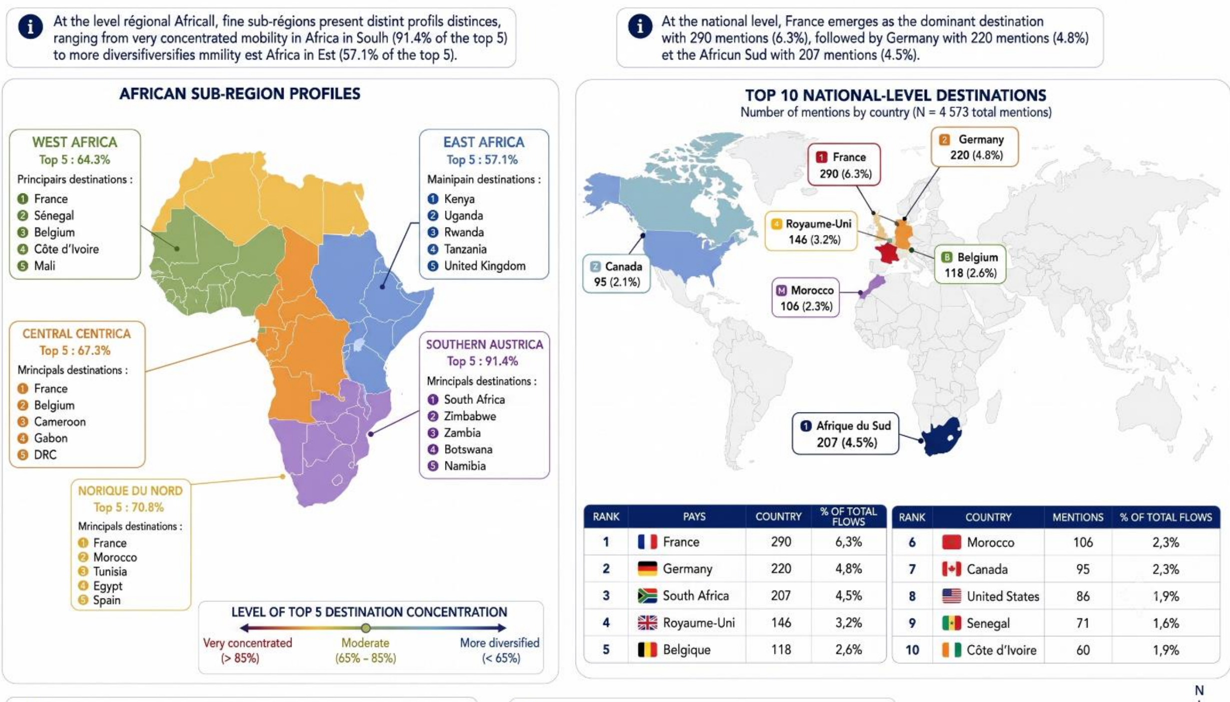
At the continental level, three major hubs shape mobility: Europe with 1,351 mentions (29.5 %), intra-African mobility with 2,239 mentions (49.0 %), and Asia with 478 mentions (10.5%), North America with 259 mentions (5.7%) and ‘Other’ with 246 mentions (5.3%).

Graph 51: Intra-African mobility by sub-region (2,239 mentions, 49 % of the total)



At the African regional level, five sub-regions exhibit distinct patterns, ranging from highly concentrated mobility in Southern Africa (91.4 % of the top 5) to more diversified mobility in East Africa (57.1 % of the top 5). Finally, at national level, France emerges as the dominant destination with 290 mentions (6.3 %), followed by Germany with 220 mentions (4.8 %) and South Africa with 207 mentions (4.5 %).

Map No. 9: Regional profiles and national destinations



RANK	PAYS	COUNTRY	% OF TOTAL FLOWS
1	France	290	6,3%
2	Germany	220	4,8%
3	South Africa	207	4,5%
4	Royaume-Uni	146	3,2%
5	Belgique	118	2,6%

RANK	COUNTRY	MENTIONS	% OF TOTAL FLOWS
6	Morocco	106	2,3%
7	Canada	95	2,3%
8	United States	86	1,9%
9	Senegal	71	1,6%
10	Côte d'Ivoire	60	1,9%

4.1.2.1 Global Continental Hubs

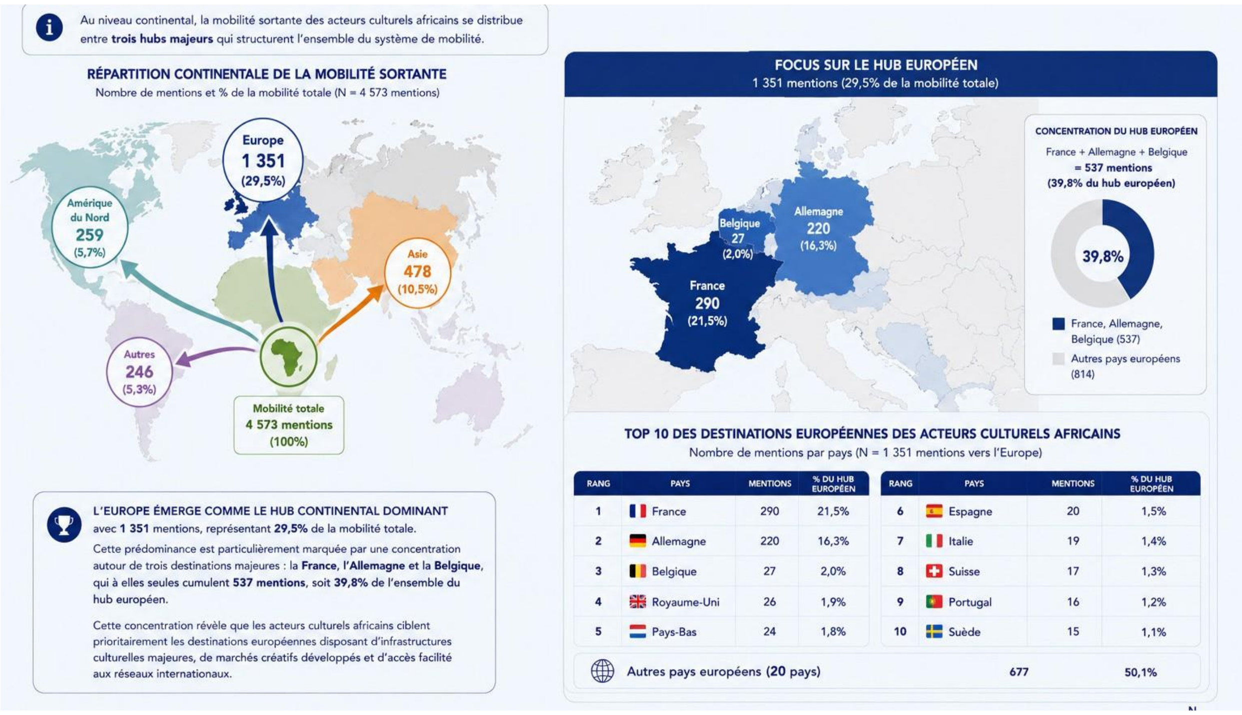
Europe: The Major International Hub

At the continental level, the outgoing mobility of African cultural actors is distributed across three major hubs that structure the entire mobility system.

Europe emerges as the dominant continental hub with 1,351 mentions, representing 29.5 % of total mobility. This predominance is particularly marked by a concentration around three major destinations: France, Germany and Belgium, which together account for 537 mentions, or 39.8 % of the entire European hub.

This concentration reveals that African cultural actors prioritise European destinations with major cultural infrastructure, developed creative markets and easy access to international networks.

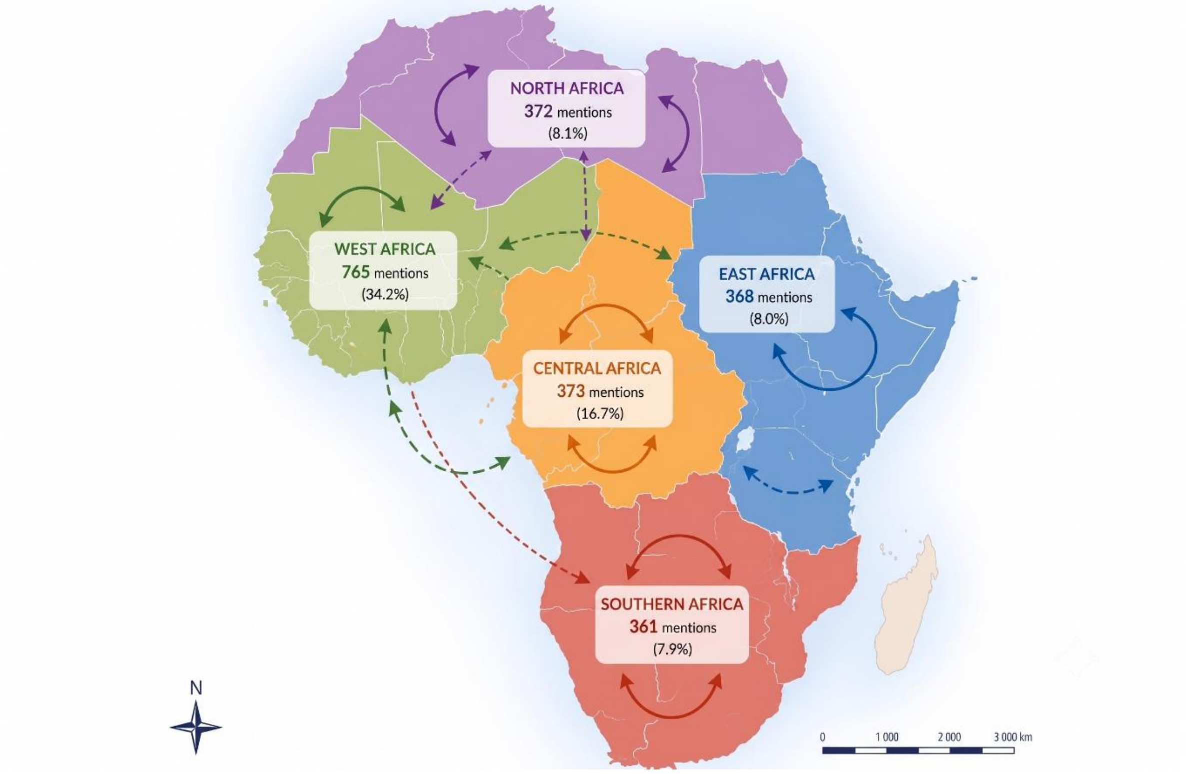
Map No. 10: Europe, the Dominant Continental Hub



Africa: The Dominant Hub

Intra-continental Africa accounts for 2,239 mentions, or 49 % of total mobility, establishing a near-perfect balance with extra-African mobility. This observation is fundamental to understanding the true dynamics of African mobility, as it reveals that regional African mobility is just as significant as mobility to international destinations. This balance challenges conventional perceptions of African mobility as being dominated by international destinations and confirms the critical importance of regional mobility in the development and consolidation of African creative ecosystems.

Map No. 11: Intra-African mobility by sub-region



However, it is unevenly distributed across the five African sub-regions. West Africa leads with 765 mentions (34.2 % of intra-African mobility), followed by Central Africa with 373 mentions (16.7 %), North Africa with 372 mentions (8.1 %), East Africa with 368 mentions (8.0 %), and Southern Africa with 361 mentions (7.9 %). This pattern reveals a significant concentration in West Africa, which alone accounts for more than a third of intra-African mobility, whilst the other sub-regions show a more balanced distribution.

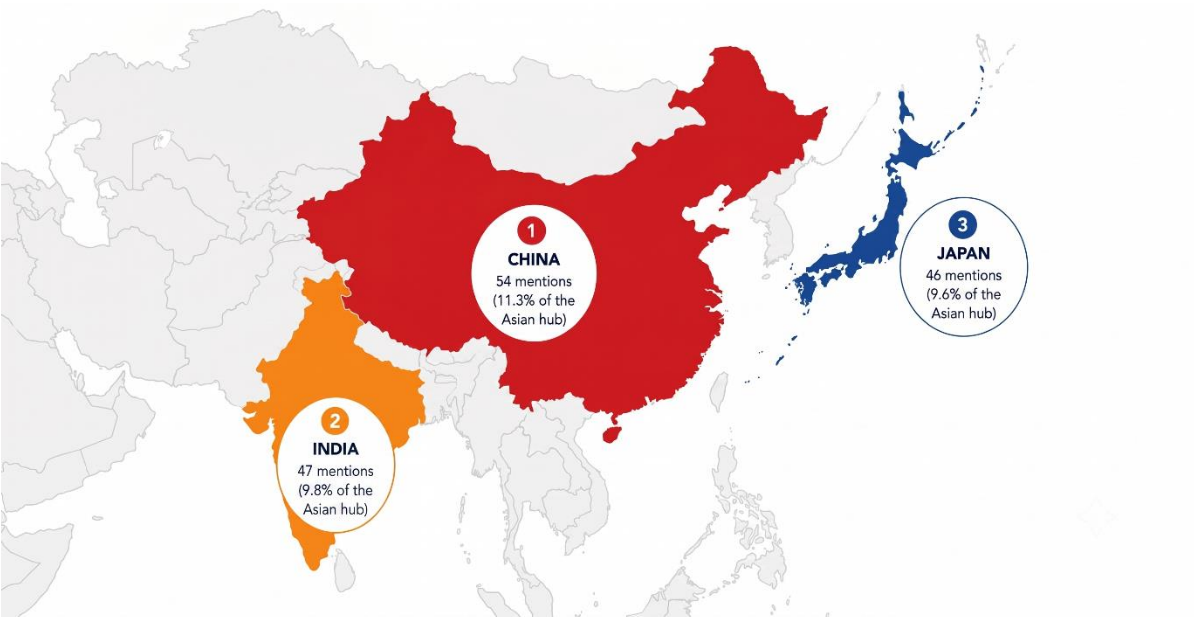
This distribution reflects both demographic and economic concentrations and differences in cultural infrastructure and regional creative networks. West Africa, with its major hubs such as Nigeria, Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire, acts as the main driver of African regional mobility, whilst the other sub-regions play complementary but important roles in the overall mobility system.

Asia: The Emerging Hub

Asia accounts for 478 mentions, or 10.5 % of total mobility, establishing the continent as an emerging yet significant hub for the mobility of African cultural actors. Unlike the European and African hubs, which are extremely concentrated around a few major destinations, the Asian hub is characterised by moderate diversity, with 32 different destinations. This diversity suggests that Asian mobility is less structured around major hubs and is instead distributed across several specialised destinations.

The three major Asian destinations are China with 54 mentions (11.3 % of the Asian hub), India with 47 mentions (9.8 %) and Japan with 46 mentions (9.6 %). The absence of a dominant destination in Asia – unlike France in Europe or Nigeria in West Africa – reveals a fragmented but potentially growing Asian mobility pattern. This fragmentation may reflect both significant geographical distances and the lack of creative networks as well-developed as those existing in Europe or Africa.

Map No. 12: The main Asian destinations for mobility



The Asian hub offers significant growth potential, particularly given the rapid economic rise of several Asian countries and the growing development of their creative sectors. The current 10.5 % share of mobility to Asia could increase substantially as Asian creative networks strengthen and economic opportunities expand.

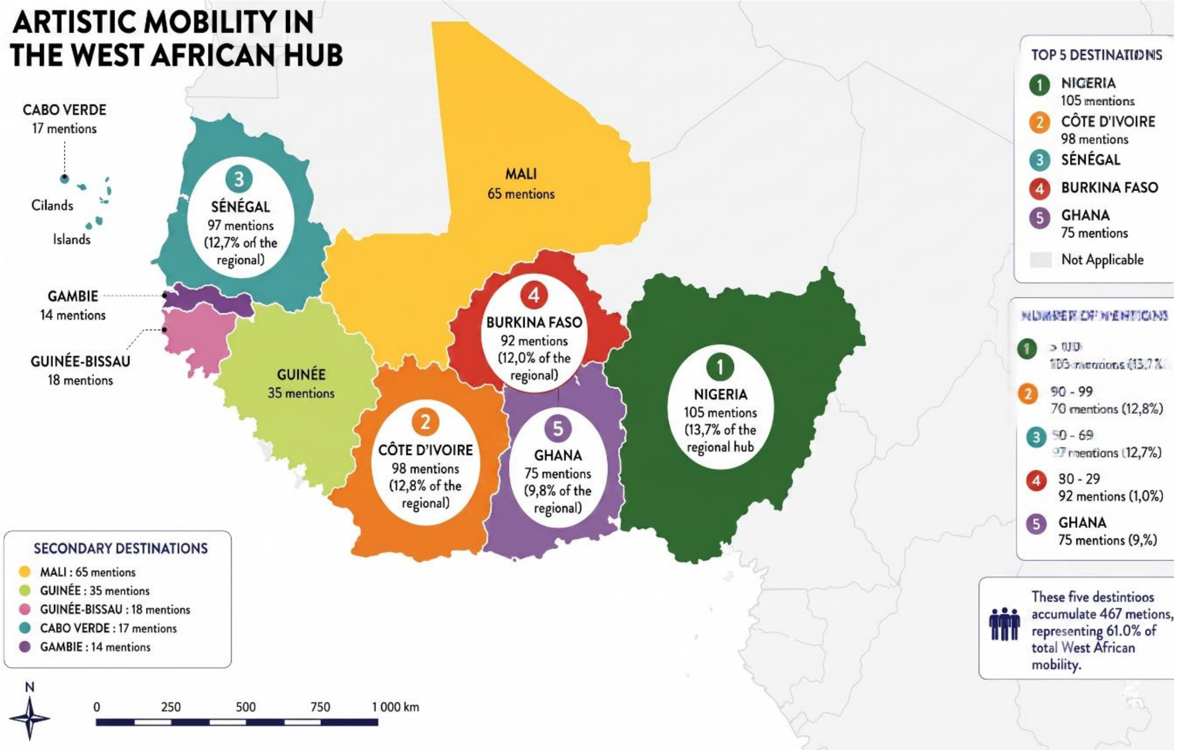
4.1.2.2 African Regional Hubs

Intra-continental mobility in Africa is centred around five major regional hubs, each with a distinct profile.

West Africa: The Dominant Regional Hub

West Africa is emerging as a dominant African regional hub with 765 mentions, accounting for 16.7 % of total global mobility and 34.2 % of intra-African mobility. It is characterised by a mobility profile concentrated around major sub-hubs but with significant diversification towards secondary destinations.

Map No. 13: The main destinations in West Africa



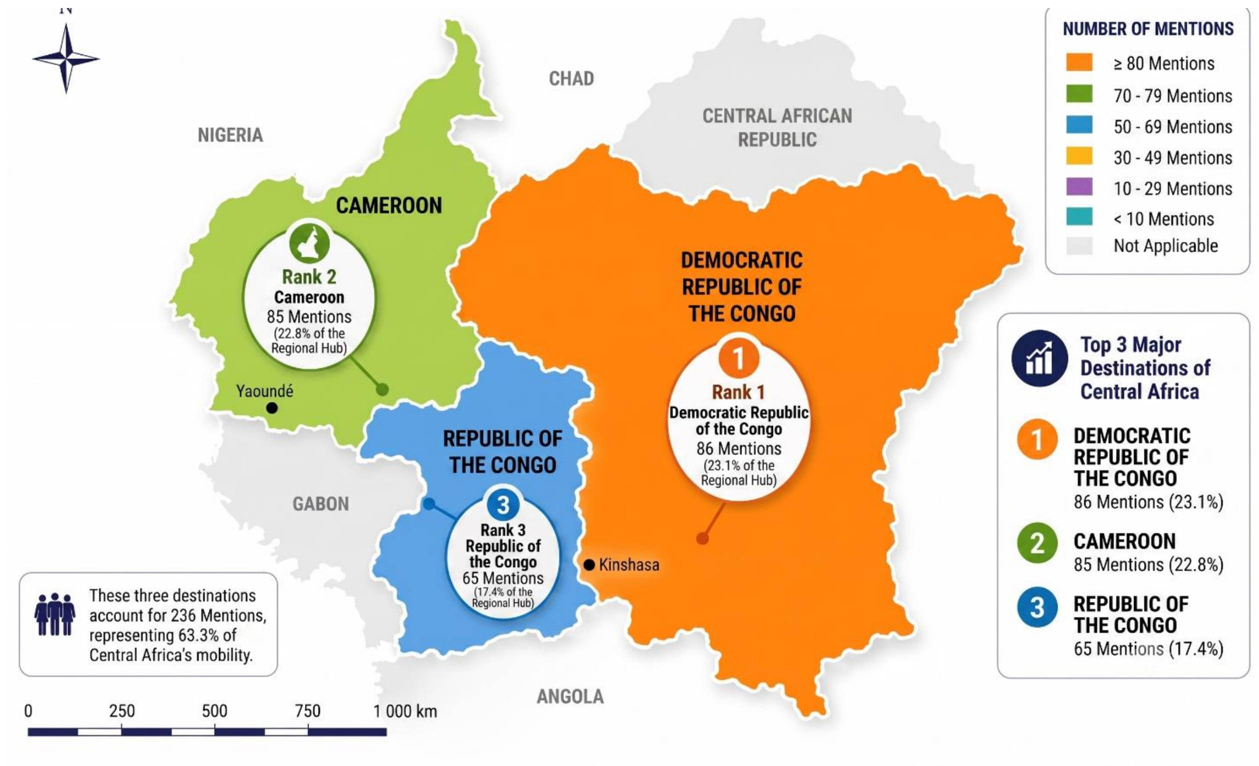
The five major destinations in West Africa are Nigeria with 105 mentions (13.7 % of the regional hub), Côte d'Ivoire with 98 mentions (12.8 %), Senegal with 97 mentions (12.7 %), Burkina Faso with 92 mentions (12 %) and Ghana with 75 mentions (9.8 %). These five destinations account for a total of 467 mentions, representing 61 % of all West African travel. This pattern reveals a very balanced regional distribution of travel across several major hubs, with no single destination dominating to any great extent.

Secondary destinations include Mali (65 mentions), Guinea (35 mentions), Guinea-Bissau (18 mentions), Cabo Verde (17 mentions) and The Gambia (14 mentions). This diversification reflects dynamic and well-distributed regional mobility, with cultural actors travelling to a variety of destinations.

Central Africa: The Fragmented Hub

Central Africa accounts for 373 mentions, representing 8.2 % of total mobility and 16.7 % of intra-African mobility. This hub is characterised by a highly concentrated mobility profile, with the five main destinations accounting for 85.0 % of regional mentions. This concentration reflects highly fragmented and undiversified regional mobility, dominated by two or three major destinations.

Map No. 14: The main destinations in Central Africa



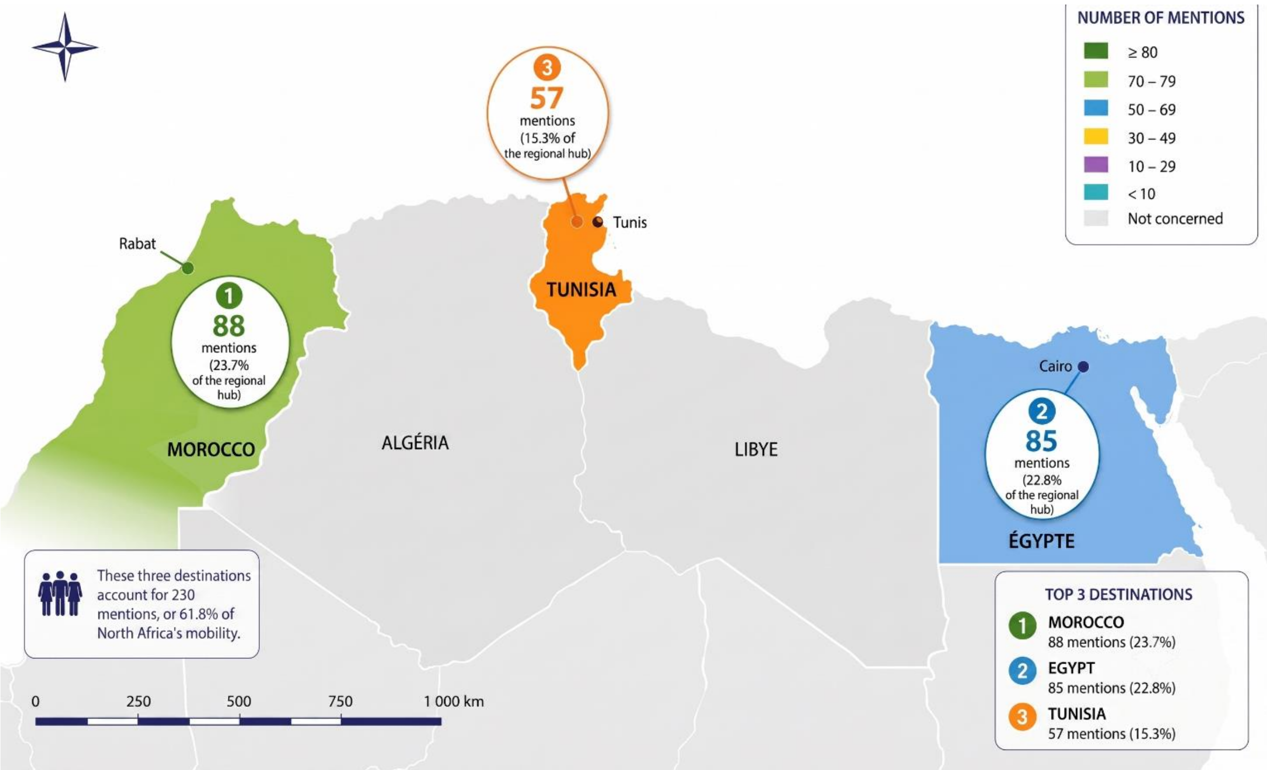
The three major destinations in Central Africa are the Democratic Republic of the Congo with 86 mentions (23.1 % of the regional hub), Cameroon with 85 mentions (22.8 %) and the Republic of the Congo with 65 mentions (17.4 %). These three destinations account for a total of 236 mentions, representing 63.3 % of all Central African mobility. This trend reflects both the infrastructure challenges in the region and the concentration of cultural opportunities in the three major hubs.

North Africa: The Mediterranean Hub

North Africa accounts for 372 mentions, representing 8.1 % of total mobility and 16.6 % of intra-African mobility. This hub is characterised by a highly concentrated mobility profile, with the five main destinations accounting for 84.1 % of regional mentions.

The three major destinations in North Africa are Morocco with 88 mentions (23.7% of the regional hub), Egypt with 85 mentions (22.8%) and Tunisia with 57 mentions (15.3%). These three destinations together account for 230 mentions, or 61.8% of all North African mobility.

Map No. 15: The main destinations in North Africa



This pattern reveals that regional mobility is heavily concentrated within the Mediterranean triangle, reflecting both the historical and cultural significance of these three destinations and their concentration of major cultural infrastructure.

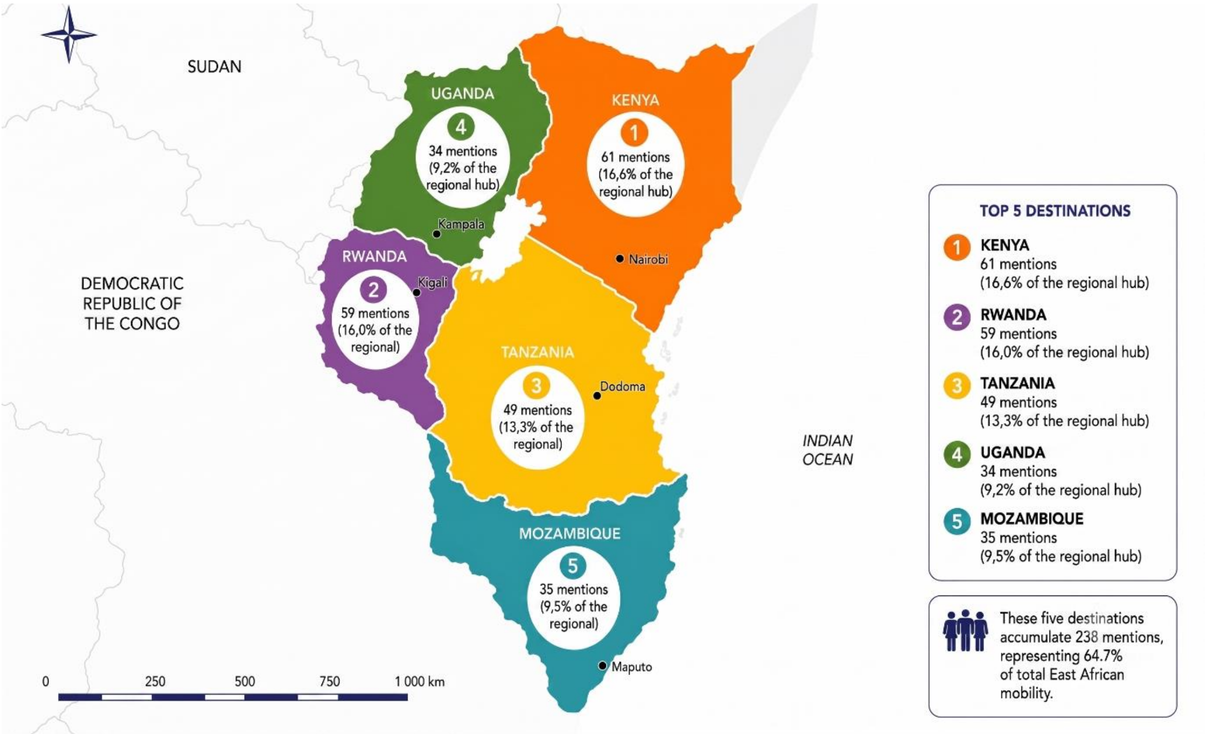
Beyond this dominant trio, North Africa features a short list of secondary destinations, including Algeria (53 mentions), Sudan (30 mentions), Libya (28 mentions) and Mauritania (26 mentions). This distribution reveals that regional travel is heavily concentrated along the Mediterranean coastline, with little travel towards the interior of the continent or towards the Sahel.

East Africa: The Balanced Hub

East Africa accounts for 368 mentions, representing 8 % of total mobility and 16.4 % of intra-African mobility. This hub is characterised by a concentrated mobility profile, yet one that is more diverse than that of the other sub-regions, with the five main destinations accounting for 57.1 % of regional mentions. This indicates a more balanced regional mobility, with a more even distribution across several major destinations.

The five major destinations in East Africa are Kenya with 61 mentions (16.6 % of the regional hub), Rwanda with 59 mentions (16 %), Tanzania with 49 mentions (13.3 %), Uganda with 34 mentions (9.2 %) and Mozambique with 35 mentions (9.5 %). These five destinations account for a total of 238 mentions, representing 64.7 % of all East African mobility.

Map No. 16: The main destinations in East Africa



Beyond this top five, East Africa features a long tail of secondary destinations, including Ethiopia (31 mentions), Burundi (33 mentions), Madagascar (30 mentions), Malawi (25 mentions) and Zambia (23 mentions).

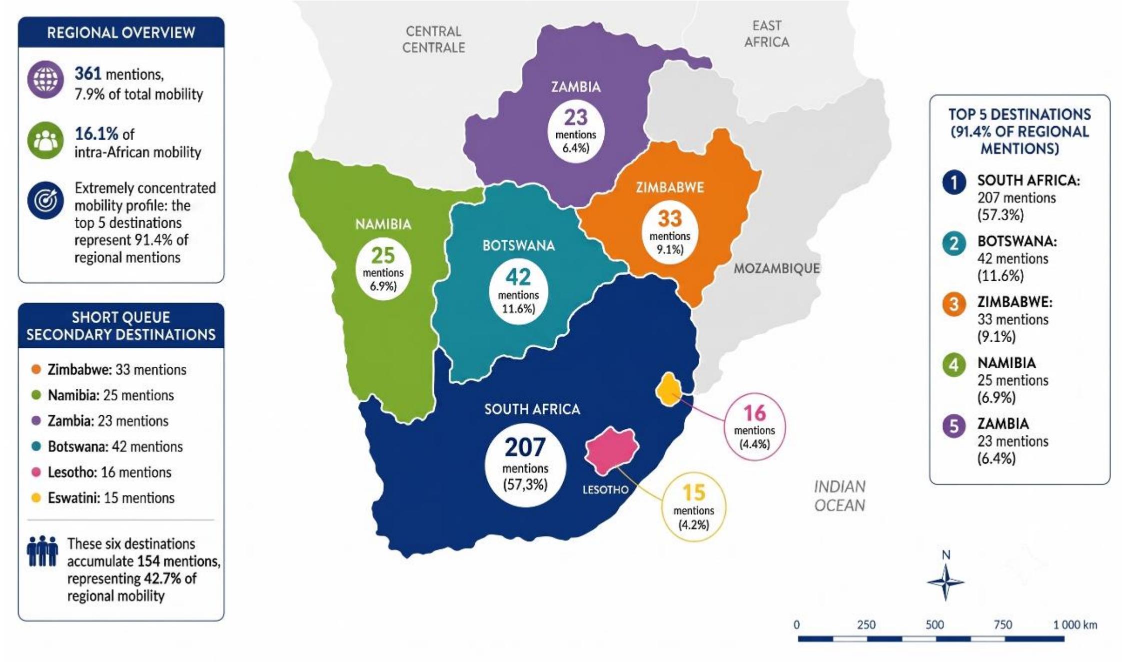
East Africa thus functions as a balanced regional hub, characterised by well-distributed mobility across several major destinations and significant diversification towards secondary destinations. This dynamic reflects highly active and well-structured regional mobility, comparable to that of West Africa but with a more balanced distribution across destinations.

Southern Africa: The Dominant Hub

Southern Africa accounts for 361 mentions, representing 7.9 % of total mobility and 16.1 % of intra-African mobility, giving it a highly concentrated mobility profile, with the five main destinations accounting for 91.4 % of regional mentions. This reveals regional mobility that is heavily concentrated in South Africa, with very little diversification towards other southern destinations.

South Africa absolutely dominates the southern hub with 207 mentions, representing 57.3 % of all regional mobility, establishing it as the region’s key hub. This is consistent with both South Africa’s economic size and the concentration of major cultural infrastructure within the country.

Map No. 17: The main destinations in Southern Africa



The Southern Africa hub features a short list of secondary destinations, including Zimbabwe (33 mentions), Namibia (25 mentions), Zambia (23 mentions), Botswana (42 mentions), Lesotho (16 mentions) and Eswatini (15 mentions). These six destinations account for a total of 154 mentions, or 42.7 % of regional mobility; however, this distribution nevertheless confirms a very low level of diversification outside South Africa.

Southern Africa thus functions as a regional hub dominated by South Africa, characterised by mobility that is extremely concentrated on a single major destination.[2]

Graph 52: Top 10 destinations by African sub-region – Outgoing mobility

4.1.3 Desired mobility

The most striking observation, once again, is the near-balance between Europe and Africa. African destinations, despite external preferences, account for 36.7% (1,052 mentions) of desired destinations, demonstrating significant aspirations for regional mobility. This is particularly pronounced in West Africa (13.1% of the total). Among these destinations, South Africa emerges as the leading African destination (6.0% of the total), serving as a regional hub for creative professionals.

Graph 53: Comparison of outgoing mobility vs. desired mobility

Graph 54: The top 20 desired mobility destinations

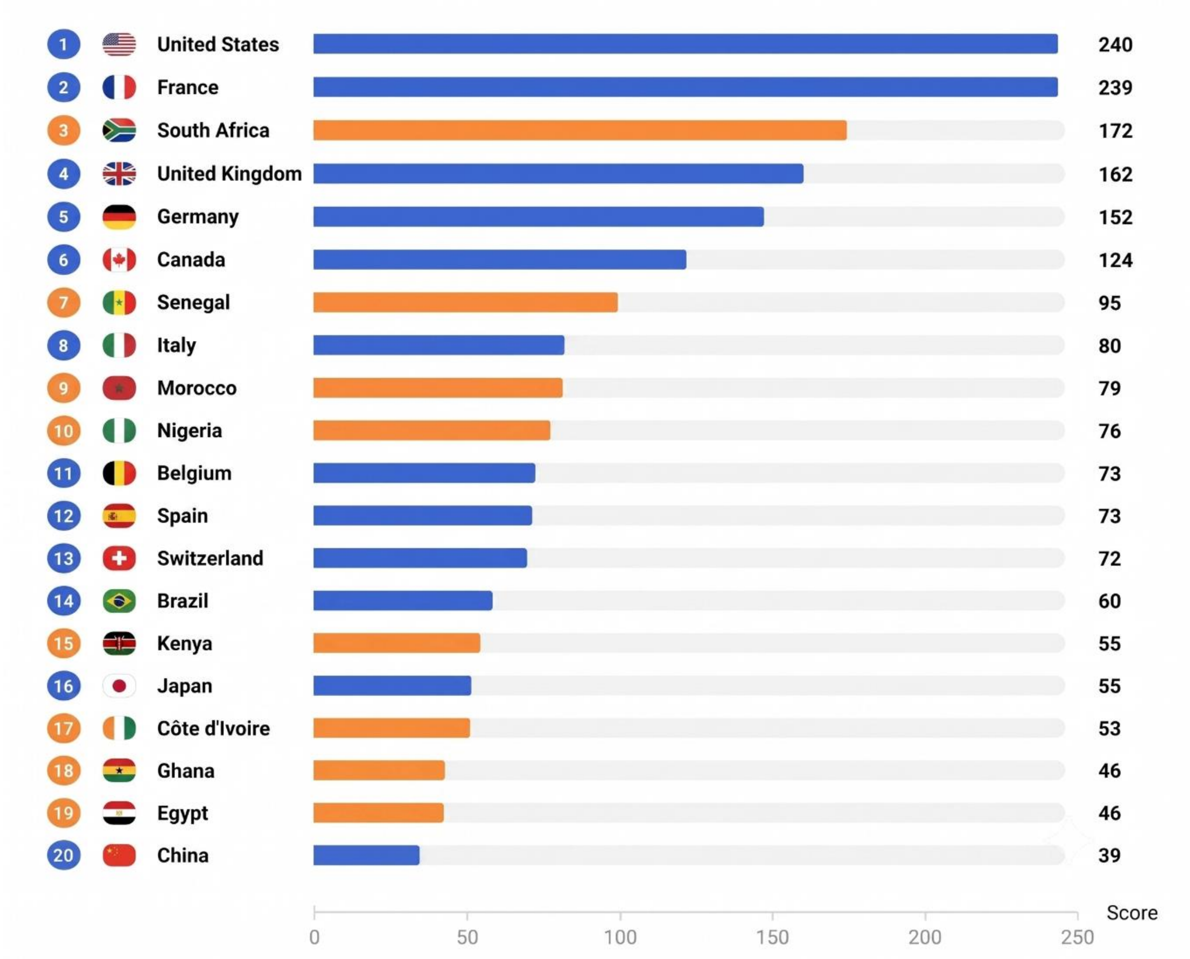


Table No. 8: Overall distribution of desired destinations

Rank	Destination	Rank	% of total
1	United States	240	8.38%
2	France	239	8.34%
3	South Africa	172	6.01%
4	United Kingdom	162	5.66%
5	Germany	152	5.31%
6	Canada	124	4.33%
7	Senegal	95	3.32%
8	Italy	80	2.79%
9	Morocco	79	2.76%
10	Nigeria	76	2.65%
11	Belgium	73	2.55%
12	Spain	73	2.55%
13	Switzerland	72	2.51%
14	Brazil	60	2.09%
15	Kenya	55	1.92%
16	Japan	53	1.85%
17	Ivory Coast	53	1.85%
18	Ghana	46	1.61%
19	Egypt	46	1.61%
20	China	39	1.36%
21	Netherlands	39	1.36%
22	Rwanda	37	1.29%
23	Tanzania	29	1.01%
24	Sweden	29	1.01%
25	United Arab Emirates	29	1.01%
26	Burkina Faso	27	0.94%
27	Democratic Republic of the Congo	26	0.91%
28	Tunisia	26	0.91%
29	Australia	26	0.91%
30	Portugal	25	0.87%

Note: *The percentages are calculated as a proportion of the total number of mentions (2,864). The 30 main destinations account for 2,355 mentions (82.2% of the total).*

At the same time, European destinations accounted for 1,068 mentions, or 37.3 % of the total, thus maintaining a very slight lead. The difference between these two figures – 1,052 versus 1,068 mentions – is minimal, but this is a significant observation: African artists and creatives aspire to almost equal levels of mobility to Africa and to Europe.

The study also highlights the appeal of North America: North American destinations (the United States and Canada) attracted 377 mentions, corresponding to 12.7 % of aspirations, revealing significant demand for geographical diversification beyond the traditional European and African hubs.

It is also worth noting that, despite 137 different destinations, desired mobility remains dominated by a small number of countries. The top four destinations (USA, France, South Africa & the UK) account for 813 mentions (28.4 %). This suggests that, rather than broad geographical diversification, African artists are seeking a strategic focus on established hubs.

Asia is a second emerging destination with 227 mentions (7.9 %), comprising 26 destinations, with the main ones being China (39), Japan (53), India (17) and Thailand (5)
It is evident that, despite its significance on the global creative stage, this region is not sufficiently connected to the African continent.

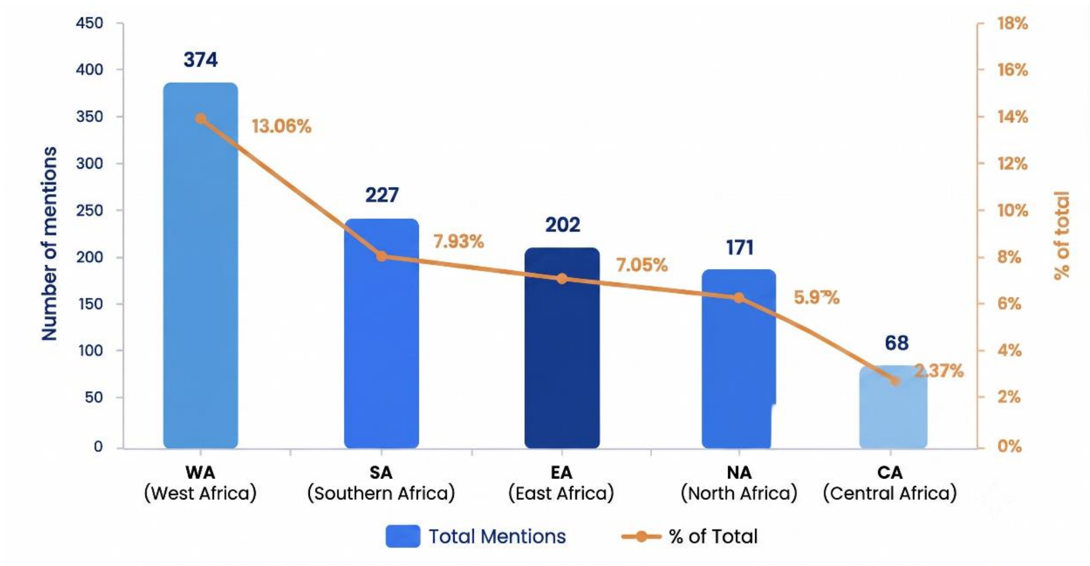
Finally, despite historical and cultural ties (the African diaspora, music, art), Latin America is largely overlooked (with the exception of the West and the Caribbean (280 mentions, 9.8%)). It accounted for only 75 mentions (2.6%), and 8 destinations, with Brazil dominating with 60 mentions

4.1.3.1 Diverse intra-African appeal

Table 9: Breakdown of preferred mobility destinations by African sub-region

Sub-region	Total mentions	# of destinations	Major sub-hubs	% of total
AO (West Africa)	374	15	Senegal 95 mentions Nigeria 76 mentions	13.06%
AA (Austral Africa)	227	7	South Africa 172 mentions	7.93%
AE (East Africa)	202	14	Kenya 55 mentions Rwanda 37 mentions	7.05%
NA (North Africa)	171	7	Morocco 79 mentions Egypt 46 mentions	5.97%
AC (Central Africa)	68	8	DRC 26 mentions	2.37%

Graph 56: Total mentions of desired destinations by sub-region



Intra-African sub-regional appeal also helps to identify sub-regional hubs, with the emergence of four major African destinations that shape desired mobility : Senegal accounts for 95 mentions (3.3 %), followed by Nigeria with 76 mentions (2.7 %) - West African hub: South Africa: 172 mentions (6.0%) - Dominant southern hub: Kenya: 55 mentions (1.9%) - East African hub. These four hubs account for 398 mentions, or 37.9% of total intra-African mobility (1,052 mentions).

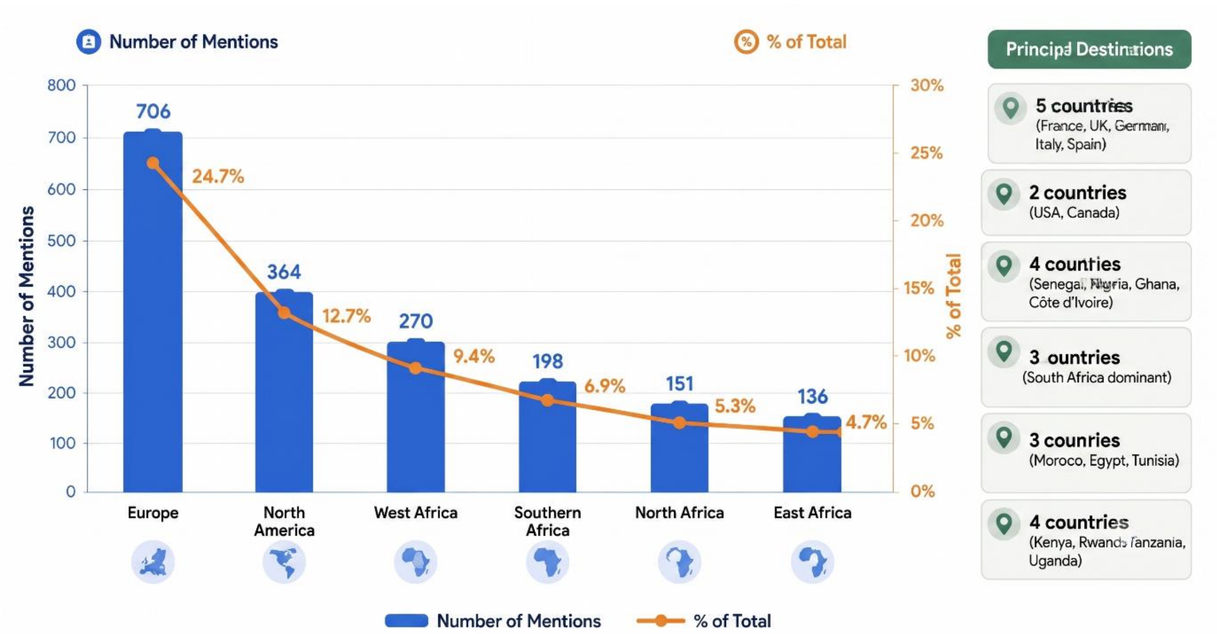
In addition, the analysis reveals an unexpected Mediterranean hub: the North Africa + Southern Europe (Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, France, Italy, Spain) accounts for 589 mentions (20.6% of the total), constituting a key mobility zone.

4.1.3.2 Distinct sub-regional preferences and a preference for established hubs

Analysis of desired destinations reveals distinct sub-regional profiles in aspirations for cultural mobility across Africa. The five sub-regions express differing preferences that reflect their specific geographical, economic and cultural contexts.

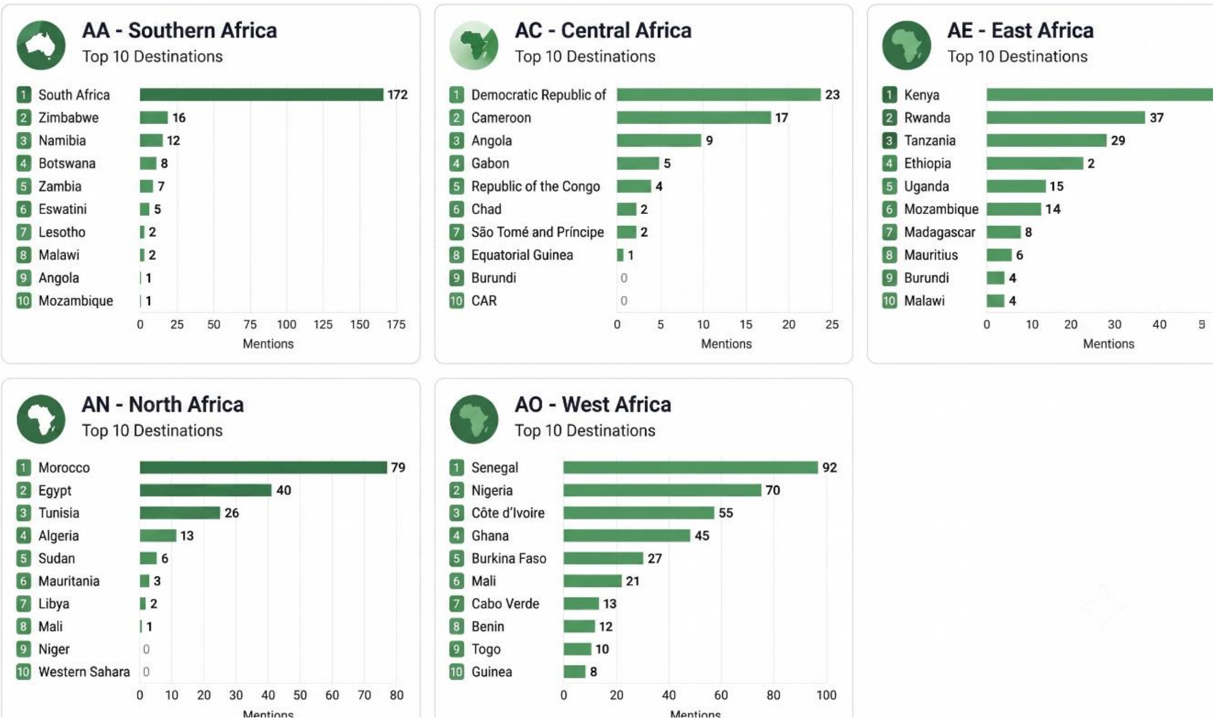
Whilst Southern Africa and East Africa favour intra-African mobility, Central Africa and West Africa maintain a strong Francophone orientation, and North Africa retains a Mediterranean orientation. North America (377 mentions, 13.2 %) is emerging as a destination of the future in three sub-regions (CA, EA, WA), particularly in West Africa (37 mentions for Canada alone), indicating a desire for diversification beyond the traditional hubs.

Graph 57: preferred mobility destinations by geographical hub



We also note the emergence of key regional hubs: four destinations (Senegal, Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya) account for 37.9 % of intra-African mobility, revealing a concentration of preference on established regional hubs rather than a diversification of horizons.

Graph 58: The main destinations for intra-African mobility by African sub-region



Southern Africa (227 mentions, 7 unique destinations, average 32.4 mentions per destination)

The Southern sub-region shows a predominantly regional focus in its mobility aspirations. South Africa emerges as the leading desired destination with 172 mentions (6.0 % of the overall total), accounting for 75.8 % of the sub-region's aspirations. This exceptional concentration on a single African destination demonstrates a dominant interest in intra-African mobility, with South Africa functioning as an indispensable regional hub.

Other African destinations (Zimbabwe: 16 mentions, Namibia: 12 mentions, Botswana: 10 mentions) confirm a marked regional preference. European destinations (Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy) rank second, with 14, 13, 12 and 9 mentions respectively. However, the United States emerges as the most sought-after non-African destination with 16 mentions (3.8 %), indicating a growing interest in diversification towards North America, although this is less pronounced than in other sub-regions.

NB: *AA recorded 227 mentions across 7 unique African destinations, with an exceptional concentration on South Africa (75.8%). This concentration reveals a highly dominant regional hub, contrasting with the diversity observed in other sub-regions.*

Central Africa (68 mentions, 8 unique destinations, average 8.5 mentions per destination)

Central Africa has the most fragmented profile of all the sub-regions, with very low intra-African mobility (68 mentions, 2.4 % of the overall total). The Democratic Republic of the Congo dominates with 26 mentions (0.9 %), followed by Cameroon with 17 mentions (0.6 %). This pattern reveals an almost total absence of African destinations in mobility aspirations, suggesting major structural barriers (visas, infrastructure, limited opportunities).

Non-African destinations dominate by a wide margin: France, Belgium, Switzerland and Canada together account for over 60 mentions, reflecting a continued focus on French-speaking countries combined with a desire to diversify towards North America.

NB: *AC recorded 68 mentions across 8 unique destinations, revealing the lowest level of intra-African mobility of all sub-regions (2.4 % of the total).*

East Africa (202 mentions, 14 unique destinations, average 14.4 mentions per destination)

East Africa shows a relative balance in its aspirations, combining regional and international mobility. Kenya leads with 55 mentions (1.9 % of the overall total), followed by Rwanda with 37 mentions (1.3 %) and Tanzania with 29 mentions (1.0 %). This pattern reveals substantial intra-African mobility (202 mentions, 7.1 % of the total), with three major regional destinations shaping aspirations.

Non-African destinations show greater diversity than in other sub-regions: France (27 mentions), Canada (20 mentions), the United States (18 mentions) and Germany (15 mentions) feature in the top 10, indicating a relative parity between African and European destinations, with growing demand for North America. East Africa stands out for its greater geographical diversity compared with Southern Africa (which is heavily concentrated on South Africa) or Central Africa (which is highly fragmented).

NB: *East Africa recorded 202 mentions across 14 unique destinations, with an average of 14.4 mentions per destination. This moderate diversity and geographical balance reflect a sub-region with balanced aspirations between regional and international mobility.*

North Africa (171 mentions, 7 unique destinations, average 24.4 mentions per destination)

North Africa has a distinctive Mediterranean and European profile. Morocco leads the way with 79 mentions (2.8 % of the overall total), followed by Egypt with 46 mentions (1.6 %) and Tunisia with 26 mentions (0.9 %). This concentration on African Mediterranean destinations (Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia = 151 mentions, 5.3 % of the total) reveals significant regional intra-African mobility, although this is less prominent than in West Africa.

European destinations (France, Italy, Spain, Germany) together account for over 150 mentions, reflecting a marked Mediterranean and European orientation.

However, this European focus is less pronounced than expected: African Mediterranean destinations (Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia) account for 151 mentions compared with 150+ for European destinations, revealing a near-balance. North America (the United States, Canada) features with 20+ mentions, indicating a minority but present demand for diversification towards the North American continent.

NB: *North Africa (NA) recorded 171 mentions across 7 unique destinations, with an average of 24.4 mentions per destination—the highest of all sub-regions. This concentration reveals a sub-region with highly targeted preferences, dominated by the Mediterranean triangle (Morocco–Egypt–Tunisia).*

West Africa (374 mentions, 15 unique destinations, average 24.9 mentions per destination)

West Africa presents the most complex and diverse profile of all the sub-regions. Senegal dominates overwhelmingly with 95 mentions (3.3 % of the overall total), followed by Nigeria with 76 mentions (2.7 %) and Côte d'Ivoire with 53 mentions (1.9 %). This pattern reveals very high levels of intra-African mobility (374 mentions, 13.1 % of the grand total—the highest of all sub-regions), with Senegal and Nigeria acting as dominant regional hubs.

Non-African destinations show remarkable diversification: France (59 mentions), Canada (37 mentions) and the United States (30 mentions) feature in the top 10, revealing a continued reliance on French-speaking countries combined with very strong demand for North America—the highest of all sub-regions (37 mentions for Canada alone). This pattern reveals a sub-region with balanced aspirations: dominant intra-African mobility (374 mentions) + very strong diversification towards North America + continued Francophone ties.

NB: *AO recorded 374 mentions—the highest total of all sub-regions—across 15 unique destinations, with an average of 24.9 mentions per destination. This sub-region displays a wide diversity of aspirations, reflecting a complex mobility profile combining regional mobility, Francophone ties and diversification towards North America.*

4.2 Mobility Practices of African Artists and Creatives

This section examines the modes of transport used by African cultural practitioners to travel within the continent.

The analysis reveals that the mobility of cultural practitioners in Africa is profoundly shaped by the available infrastructure. Civil aviation remains the dominant mode of transport for intercontinental and regional travel, reflecting both the continent's needs and its challenges.

Distinct regional patterns reveal that each sub-region develops a unique mobility framework, determined by its infrastructural, economic and geographical characteristics. Southern Africa and West Africa exhibit greater diversity in modes of transport, reflecting greater investment in infrastructure. In contrast, Central Africa remains heavily reliant on aviation, highlighting major infrastructural challenges.

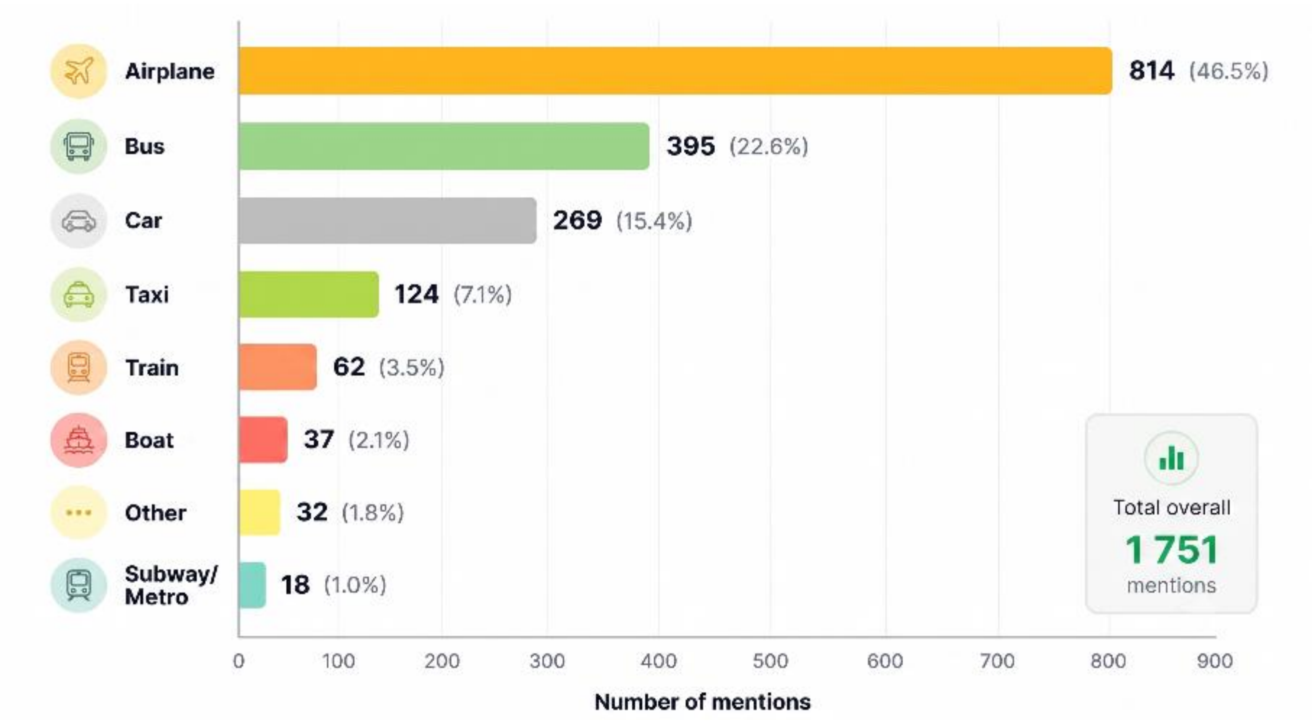
4.2.1 Overall analysis of modes of transport (International Mobility)

The overall analysis reveals an extreme reliance on civil aviation for cultural mobility in Africa. Of the 1,751 total mentions, 814 relate to air travel, accounting for 46.5 % of all journeys. This predominance reflects the continent's infrastructure challenges, where intercontinental distances and limited road infrastructure make aviation indispensable for long-distance travel.

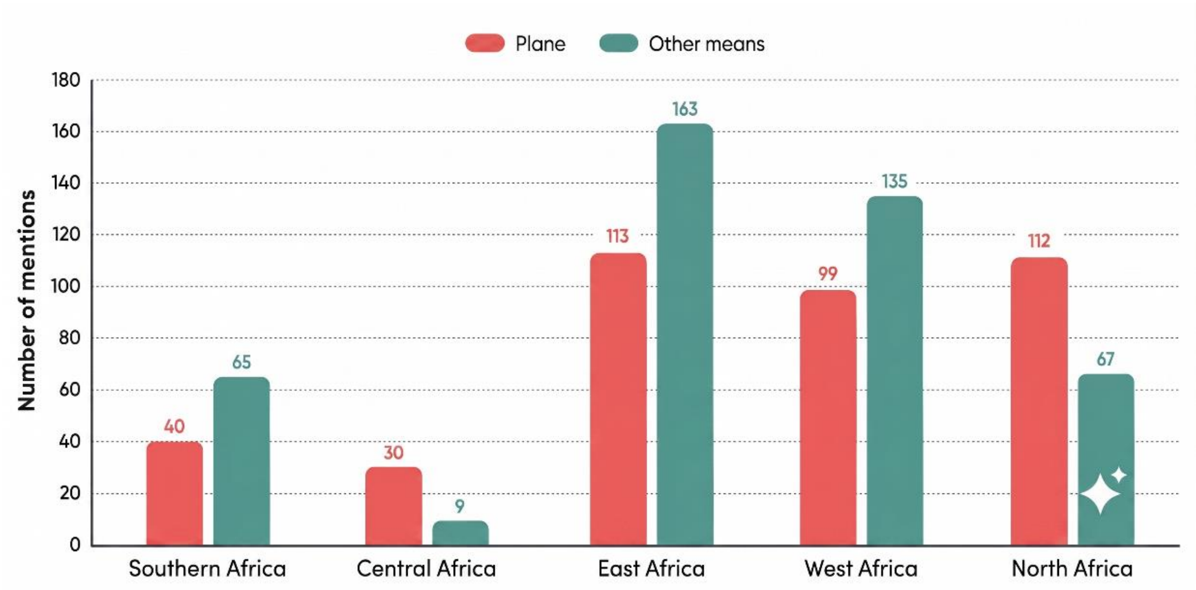
Road transport (buses and cars) is the second largest category with 664 mentions (38 %). Buses alone account for 395 mentions (22.6 %), whilst cars account for
269 (15.4%). These two modes are particularly important for regional and intra-urban journeys.

Other modes of transport (taxi, train, boat, underground) together account for 15.5 % of mentions, indicating marginal but significant use in certain specific regions.

Graph 59: Overall Distribution of Modes of Transport



Graph 60: Comparison of Air Travel vs Other Modes of Transport by Sub-region



4.2.1.1 Analysis by African sub-region

Analysis by sub-region reveals very distinct mobility patterns, reflecting the infrastructural, economic and geographical differences between African regions.

North Africa

North Africa shows the highest preference for civil aviation, with 112 mentions (62.6 % of the regional total). This predominance reflects the significant distances involved and the connections with Europe and the Middle East. Road transport (buses and cars) accounts for 28 mentions (15.6 %), indicating a well-structured but much less extensive regional transport network. Taxis feature significantly with 12 mentions (6.7 %), being particularly important for local urban travel.

Graph 61: Heatmap: Modes × Sub-regions

Sub-region	Airplane	Boat	Bus	Car	Subway/ Metro	Other	Taxi	Train
Southern Africa	40	1	22	23	2	1	12	4
Central Africa	30	0	5	3	0	0	1	0
East Africa	113	6	79	40	3	4	19	12
West Africa	99	2	65	42	1	5	14	5
North Africa	112	5	9	19	4	10	12	8

West Africa

West Africa shows a more nuanced balance between air travel (99 mentions, 42.3 %) and road transport (107 mentions, 45.7 %). Buses are the second most common mode of transport, with 65 mentions (27.8%), reflecting the importance of regional road networks and intra-regional travel. This region shows greater diversity in modes of transport, with significant use of taxis (14 mentions).

Central Africa

Central Africa shows the greatest reliance on air travel, with 30 mentions (76.9 % of the regional total). This concentration reflects the region's major infrastructure challenges, with limited road networks and long distances. Bus travel is the only significant alternative, with 5 mentions (12.8 %).

East Africa

East Africa presents a balanced profile, with air travel accounting for 113 mentions (40.9 %), followed by buses with 79 mentions (28.6 %). This region shows the greatest diversity in modes of transport, with significant use of rail (12 mentions, 4.3 %), particularly in South Africa and Kenya.

Southern Africa

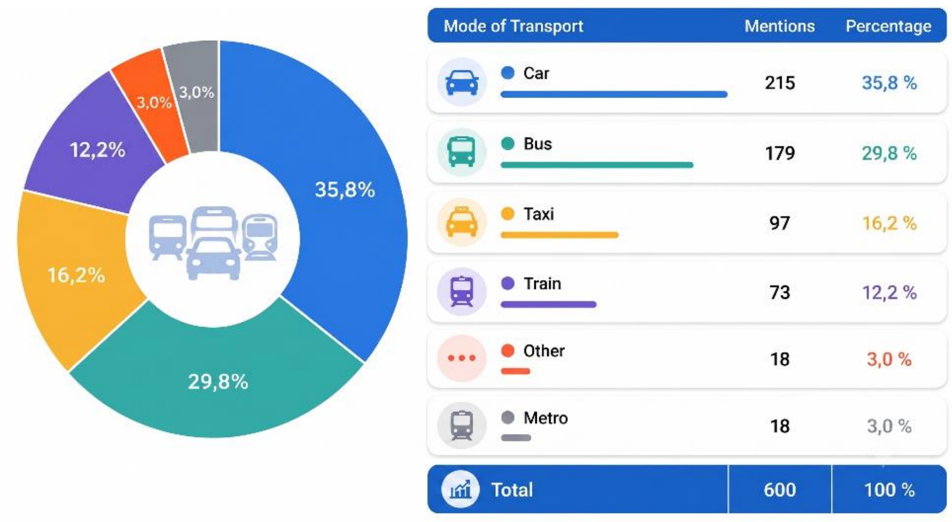
Southern Africa has the most balanced profile, with air travel accounting for 40 mentions (38.1%), closely followed by car travel (23 mentions, 21.9%) and bus travel (22 mentions, 21.0%). This region has more developed road and rail infrastructure, allowing for greater diversity in modes of transport. Trains account for 4 mentions (3.8%), reflecting the regional rail networks.

4.2.2 Overall analysis of modes of transport (National Mobility)

The overall analysis reveals a profile of national mobility that is radically different from regional and international mobility. The car dominates with 215 mentions (35.8%), followed by the bus with 179 mentions (29.8%). Together, these two modes account for 65.6% of all journeys within the same country.

Taxis rank third with 97 mentions (16.2%), highlighting the importance of urban transport for cultural mobility. Trains account for 73 mentions (12.2%), a significantly higher proportion than in regional mobility (3.5%).

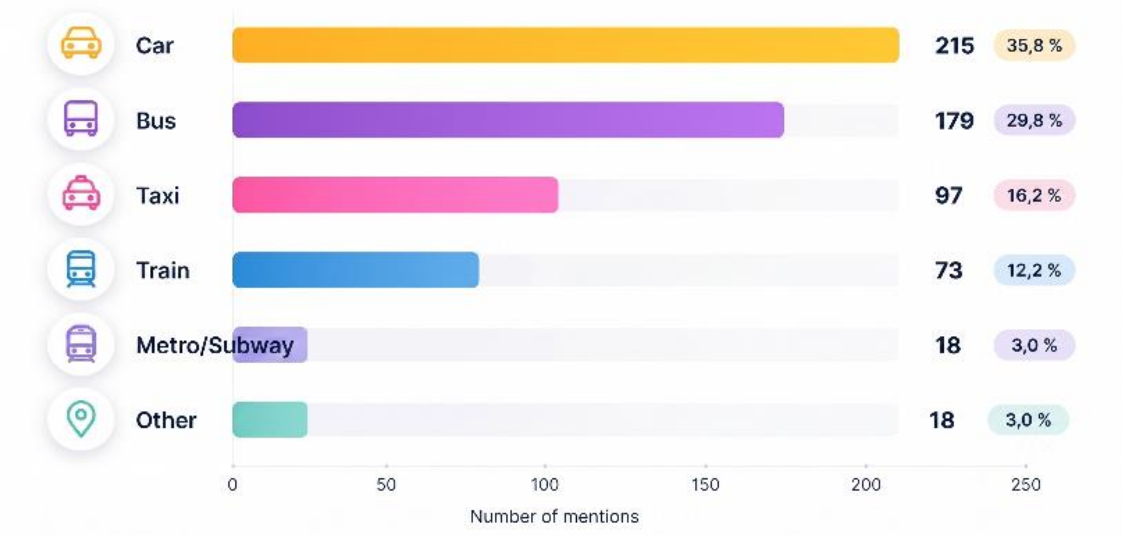
Graph 62: Overall Distribution of Modes of Transport (National Mobility)



4.2.1.2 Analysis by sub-region

Analysis by sub-region reveals consistency in national mobility trends, with cars and buses dominating in all regions. However, significant variations emerge in the use of trains and taxis.

Graph 63: Overall Distribution of Modes of Transport



North Africa

North Africa presents a unique profile, with trains accounting for 27.9 % of mentions – the highest proportion on the continent. Cars and buses account for 23.5% and 23.5% respectively, indicating a balance between private and public transport. The metro plays a significant role with 12 mentions (8.8%), reflecting the presence of well-developed urban transport systems in Egypt and Tunisia.

West Africa

West Africa shows a balanced profile, with cars dominating at 39.5 %, followed by buses at 33.1 %. Taxis account for 18.5 %, highlighting the importance of urban transport. Trains are virtually non-existent (7 mentions, 5.6 %), reflecting the lack of developed rail networks.

Graph 64: Heatmap: Modes × Sub-regions

Central Africa

Central Africa shows a similar profile to West Africa, with cars at 37.9 % and buses at 34.5 %. Trains account for 13.8 %.

East Africa

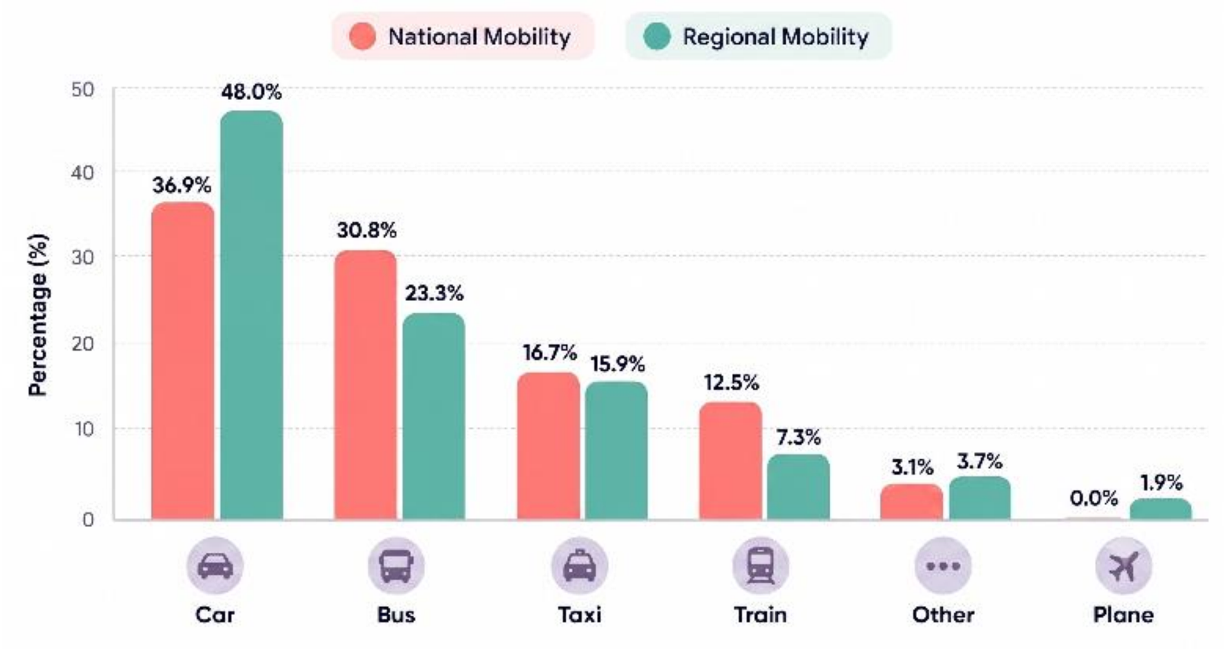
East Africa has the most balanced profile, with cars at 38.1 % and buses at 32.7 %. Taxis account for 15.9 %, highlighting the importance of urban transport. Trains play a significant role, accounting for 8.0 %, reflecting regional rail networks, particularly in Kenya and Tanzania.

Southern Africa (5 countries, 85 mentions)

Southern Africa shows the highest preference for cars, accounting for 43.5 % of mentions.

Buses account for 25.9 %, whilst taxis play a significant role at 20%, reflecting the development of urban transport infrastructure. Trains account for 7.1 %, indicating the presence of regional rail networks.

Graph 65: Comparison of National Mobility vs Regional Mobility



IV . MOBILITY OBSTACLES & CHALLENGES

IV- OBSTACLES & CHALLENGES TO MOBILITY

1. REGULATION AND TAXATION

The regulatory and tax framework for cultural mobility in Africa is extremely fragmented, with each country applying its own tax regimes, visa requirements and regulatory frameworks. These barriers vary considerably by region, with West and Central Africa presenting the greatest obstacles, whilst Southern, North and East Africa offer more favourable conditions.

1.1 Direct tax barriers

1.1.1 Taxation of Cultural Services and Performances

The first barrier concerns the taxation of cultural services and artistic performances. With regard to the taxation of visiting foreign artists, the responses received reveal a variety of approaches. Some countries (e.g. Malawi) favour specific authorisation and royalty systems, whilst others (e.g. Zambia, Botswana) apply withholding tax on remuneration, with conditions varying according to national legislation. The issue of copyright and event fees is distinct from direct taxation on the income from the stage performance itself.

An analysis of the responses from those interviewed during this study reveals a variety of approaches, offering an insight into the diverse practices and nuances that exist in terms of taxation for international artists. Key points include :

- **The absence of direct tax, but the existence of royalties and legal authorisations :** In Malawi, for example, there does not appear to be any direct tax levied on foreign artists. However, they are required to obtain several permits, particularly for public performances and from the copyright office, which involves the payment of a small licence fee.

- **The application of withholding tax conditional on remuneration :** In Zambia, for example, a withholding tax system applies to foreign artists, but only if they receive remuneration for their performance. If they are not paid, they must provide proof of non-remuneration in order to obtain their visa, and are not subject to tax.

- **Generalised withholding tax :** Botswana, Tunisia and Morocco, for example, apply withholding tax on the remuneration of any foreign artist performing in the country.

- **Royalties and event costs distinct from tax :** in other contexts, a clear distinction is made between royalties and costs associated with organising a live performance (paid by the organiser) and the artist's income tax. These royalties, based on a percentage (15 % or more), applyto both foreign and national artists, except in the case of self-produced works.

- **A general principle of taxation of paid work :** Another perspective noted is that all paid work is taxable, including that of foreign artists performing in the country. This approach aligns the tax treatment of international artists with that of other service providers.

A comparative analysis reveals four distinct approaches, often combined within the same country :

- An administrative system of prior authorisation, accompanied by a fee specific to the performance or the artist's entry into the country, independent of the general tax system (Malawi, Zimbabwe).

- A specific withholding tax, explicitly designated for 'non-resident artists and sportspeople' or 'public entertainment', distinct from other categories of income (Zambia, Botswana, South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana, as well as Tunisia with regard to its personal income tax component).

- A specific tax on the contract itself, distinct from income tax, which may provide for an exemption depending on the cultural or commercial nature of the event (Tunisia).

- The absence of a dedicated tax category for artists: their remuneration is therefore subsumed within the general withholding tax regime applicable to services provided by a non-resident (Morocco, Senegal, Cameroon).

This latter category warrants attention: the absence of a specific regime does not mean there is no taxation, but reflects a choice or a simple legislative omission to treat artistic mobility as an ordinary cross-border flow of services rather than as a separate economic category. In practice, this lack of specific clarity can complicate matters for organisers, who must then refer to the general rate applicable to foreign service providers, sometimes with some uncertainty as to the exact classification of the remuneration paid.

Double Taxation : Many African countries levy withholding tax on income generated by artistic performances, even when the artist is not a resident. At the same time, the artist's country of origin may also tax this income, resulting in a situation of double taxation[11].

Example: A Senegalese musician on tour in Mali:
A Senegalese musician undertakes a concert tour in Mali, generating gross income of USD 50,000. Mali applies a 35 % withholding tax on income from artistic performances (the

[11] *UNESCO (2019). "Culture and Development in Africa: Fiscal Barriers to Cultural Mobility". Paris: UNESCO Publishing.*

regime applicable to general commercial services), amounting to USD 17,500[12]. The musician returns to Senegal and declares this income to the Senegalese tax authorities, who levy a 25 % income tax on foreign earnings, amounting to USD 12,500.

The musician has therefore paid USD 30,000 in tax (60 % of gross income), retaining only USD 20,000. By comparison, a French musician touring another EU country would pay around 15–20 % in tax in total.

High tax rates: Some countries apply very high tax rates on cultural services. For example:

1. Ivory Coast[13] : 35–40 % withholding tax on cultural services
2. Cameroon[14] : 30 % withholding tax
3. Egypt[15] : 25 % withholding tax

**By comparison, European countries generally apply reduced VAT rates (5–15)[16] on cultural services, with no additional withholding tax for resident artists.*

1.1.2 Taxes on Performances and Cultural Events

Taxes on performances and cultural events constitute a third major barrier.

Example: A music festival in West Africa:

An international music festival is organised in Burkina Faso with a total budget of USD 500,000. Ticket sales are estimated at USD 200,000. Burkina Faso applies an 18 % VAT on tickets, plus a specific tax on performances of 12 %, resulting in a total tax burden of 30 % on ticket sales. The promoter must pay USD 60,000 in taxes, reducing net revenue to USD 140,000. Furthermore, imported equipment is subject to 25 % customs duties, adding USD 50,000 to the festival's costs[17] .

1.1.3 Copyright and Royalties

Copyright and royalties present a second significant tax challenge. Copyright regimes are fragmented and often poorly harmonised with national tax frameworks. Many African countries apply withholding tax on copyright royalties, often at high rates.

Example : A Nigerian song broadcast in West Africa: A Nigerian song is broadcast on radio stations and streaming platforms in five West African countries (Nigeria, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal, Mali). The total copyright revenue generated is USD 100,000. However, each country

[12] *Directorate General of Public Finances (Mali) (2023). "Fiscal system & Cultural Services". Bamako.*
[13] *Ministry of Economy & Finances (Côte d'Ivoire) (2023). "Code Fiscal 2023". Abidjan.*
[14] *Directorate General des Impôts (Cameroun) (2023). "Fiscality of Cultural Services ". Yaoundé.*
[15] *Egyptian Tax Authority (2023). "Cultural Services Tax Regime". Cairo.*
[16] *European Commission (2023). "VAT Rates for Cultural Services in EU Member States". Brussels.*
[17] *Ministère de l'Économie et des Finances (Burkina Faso) (2023). "Régimes Fiscaux des Spectacles". Ouagadougou.*

applies different withholding tax rates : Nigeria (10 %), Ghana (15 %), Côte d'Ivoire (20 %), Senegal (12 %), Mali (18 %).

The artist ultimately receives only USD 55,000 (45 % of gross revenue) in the end, with USD 45,000 lost to withholding tax. Furthermore, the artist must comply with different reporting requirements in each country, creating a considerable administrative burden[18] .

1.2. Sub-regional analysis of tax barriers

Table 10: Comparison of sub-regional barriers [19]

Region	Withholding tax rate	Visa fees	Visa Processing Time	Overall Accessibility
North Africa	15–25%	50 USD	1–2 weeks	Moderate
West Africa	30–40%	100–150 USD	2–4 weeks	Very Low
Central Africa	30–40%	150 USD	4–6 weeks	Very Low
East Africa	15–25%	50 USD	1–2 days	Good
Southern Africa	15–25%	Free	1–2 days	Very Good

1.2.1 North Africa

North Africa (Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Libya) is characterised by moderate tax and administrative barriers, with a degree of harmonisation within the region. North African countries apply relatively moderate tax regimes for cultural services, with withholding tax rates of between 15–25%. Egypt applies 25 %, Morocco 20 %, and Tunisia 18 %[20].

1.2.2 West Africa

West Africa (Senegal, Mali, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Liberia, Sierra Leone) is characterised by very high fiscal and administrative barriers.
Very High Tax Barriers: West Africa applies the highest withholding tax rates on the continent, ranging from 30–40 %. Côte d'Ivoire applies 35–40 %, Cameroon 30 %, and Mali 28 %[21].

[18] *WIPO (2022). "Copyright Royalty Withholding Rates in West Africa". Geneva: World Intellectual Property Organization*
[19] *African Union Commission (2023). "Comparative Analysis of Fiscal and Administrative Barriers to Cultural Mobility by Sub-Region". Addis Ababa.*
[20] *IMF (2023). "Fiscal Regimes for Cultural Services in North Africa". Washington DC.*
[21] *ECOWAS Commission (2023). "Tax Regimes for Cultural Services in West Africa". Abuja.*

Example: A Ghanaian musician touring in Côte d'Ivoire must pay 35–40 % withholding tax, plus a visa fee of 100 USD and a tax registration fee of 150 USD, amounting to total administrative and tax costs of 40–50 % of gross income [22] .

1.2.4 Central Africa

Central Africa (Cameroon, DRC, Congo, Gabon, Chad, Central African Republic, Equatorial Guinea) is characterised by very high tax and administrative barriers, combined with significant political instability.

Example: A Cameroonian musician touring the DRC must pay 35 % withholding tax, plus visa fees of USD 150, plus tax registration fees of USD 200, resulting in total administrative and tax costs of 40–50 % of gross income[23].

1.2.5 East Africa

East Africa (Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Ethiopia, Somalia) is characterised by moderate tax and administrative barriers.

Example: A Ugandan musician touring in Kenya must pay 15 % withholding tax, plus a visa fee of 50 USD, resulting in total administrative and tax costs of 15–20 % of gross income[24]

1.2.6 Southern Africa

Southern Africa (South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, Lesotho, Eswatini, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi) is characterised by moderate tax and administrative barriers.

Example: A Tanzanian musician touring South Africa must pay 20 % withholding tax, with no visa fees (visas are free for SADC nationals), resulting in total administrative and tax costs of 20 % of gross income [25].

1.3. Visa Regimes and Mobility

1.3.1 Restrictive intra-African visa regimes

Visa regimes constitute a major barrier to cultural mobility[26].
Each African country applies its own requirements, processing times and eligibility criteria, with no regional harmonisation [11] . Processing times vary considerably from country to country. Some countries process applications quickly (Rwanda, Kenya and Botswana in 1–2 days), whilst others take several weeks (Cameroon, the DRC and Mali in 3–6 weeks). These

[22] Ministry of Economy and Finance (Côte d'Ivoire) (2023). 'Fiscal Barriers to Cultural Mobility'. Abidjan.
[23] ECCAS (2023). 'Fiscal and Administrative Barriers to Cultural Mobility in Central Africa'. Bangui.
[24] East African Community (2023). 'Cultural Mobility and Tax Harmonisation in East Africa'. Arusha.
[25] Southern African Development Community (2023). 'Cultural Mobility and Free Movement of Professionals
[26] *African Union (2023). "Visa Regimes and Cultural Mobility in Africa". Addis Ababa.*

long processing times make it difficult to organise tours or participate in cultural events at short notice[27].

The documentation requirements for obtaining a visa vary considerably and are complex, creating a significant burden, particularly for independent artists[28]. Visa fees range from 20 USD to 200 USD or more, depending on the country. For independent artists or small organisations, these fees represent a significant financial burden, particularly when multiple visas are required for a multi-country tour.
Furthermore, many African countries do not have specific visa categories for artists, forcing them to apply for unsuitable tourist or business visas[29].

Example: A regional tour by a dance troupe:
A Cameroonian dance troupe is undertaking a three-month tour across eight African countries. Each member of the troupe (10 people) must obtain a visa for each country. The total cost of visas for the group is 4,100 USD (10 people × 7 countries × an average fee of 58 USD). For a group with gross earnings of 50,000 USD, this represents 8.2 % of the total budget. By comparison, a European group undertaking a similar tour within the EU would incur no visa costs[30].

1.3.2 Mobility and visas to Europe: High rejection rates

Schengen visa applications from African artists face rejection rates considerably higher than the global average. Around 30 % of applications from Africa are rejected, compared with a global average of 18 %. A 2023 study reveals that 61.6 % of African artists and 77.1 % of African arts organisations have had at least one visa application rejected since 2019 [31]. These figures point to a systemic barrier to cultural mobility to Europe.

Schengen visa applications require extensive documentation (bank statements, proof of financial means, a detailed itinerary, proof of ties to the country of origin, a criminal record check, and evidence of artistic recognition) and are processed within 15 days on average, with the possibility of an extension to 60 or 90 days in the event of further verification[32] .

1.3.3 Regional harmonisation initiatives

The African Union has launched the 'African Passport' and 'Free Movement of Persons' initiatives to facilitate intra-African mobility. This initiative aims to remove restrictions on Africans' ability to travel, work and live within the continent. However, this initiative has not

[27] *Africa Visa Openness Index (2023). "Visa Processing Times in African Countries". Johannesburg.*
[28] *Art Residency Africa (2025). "Visa Requirements for Artist Residencies in Africa: Country-by-Country Guide". Johannesburg.*
[29] *Africa Visa Openness Index (2023). "Visa Fees in African Countries". Johannesburg.*
[30] *World Travel and Tourism Council (2023). "Visa Costs and Cultural Tourism in Africa". London.*
[31] *Council of the European Union (2023). "Schengen Visa Statistics: Rejection Rates by Region". Brussels.*
[32] *European Commission (2023). "Schengen Visa Code: Documentation Requirements and Processing Times". Brussels.*

yet been fully implemented by all member states, and its adoption remains uneven[33] .

Some regional economic communities (RECs) have established free movement schemes. The SADC (Southern African Development Community), the EAC (East African Community) and ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) provide for the free movement of nationals of member states. However, these schemes are not always fully implemented or respected, and administrative barriers often persist despite regional agreements[34] .

Some African countries have recently improved their visa regimes for artists. Togo has announced a visa-free scheme for African nationals from 2026. South Africa has created a specific visa category for artists, allowing short-term stays for specific artistic activities. Rwanda and Kenya have introduced fast-track processing times and visa categories for cultural professionals[35] .

These recent developments point in a positive direction towards improving cultural mobility in Africa. However, further efforts are needed to harmonise visa regimes at continental and regional levels.

2. Access to information on mobility.

Access to information is a fundamental element of access to mobility ; however, quantitative and qualitative data reveal that it remains a major challenge for African artists. This synthesis presents an integrated analysis of quantitative data on access to information (collected from 603 respondents across five African sub-regions) and qualitative data from interviews with African cultural practitioners.

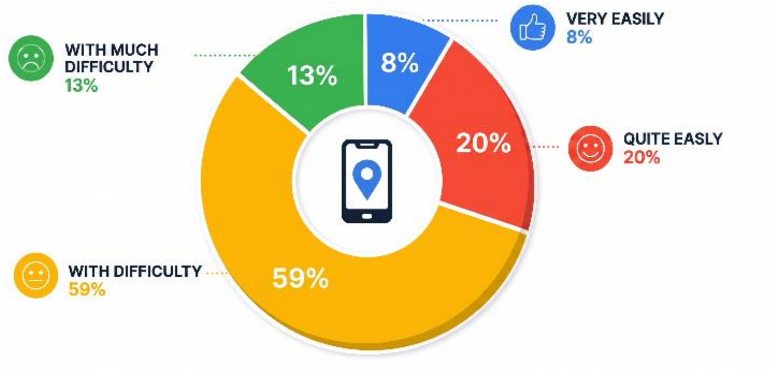
This information deficit acts as an invisible barrier. Even if an artist has the necessary financial and administrative resources, without access to the appropriate information, they cannot identify opportunities, understand procedures, or navigate administrative requirements. Information is therefore a fundamental element of access to mobility, just as important as financial resources or administrative documents.

2.1 A Widespread Information Gap

Quantitative data reveal a widespread information deficit regarding cultural mobility. Of all respondents : only 8 % have very easy access to information on mobility, 20 % have easy access, 59 % have difficulty accessing it, and 13 % have great difficulty accessing it.

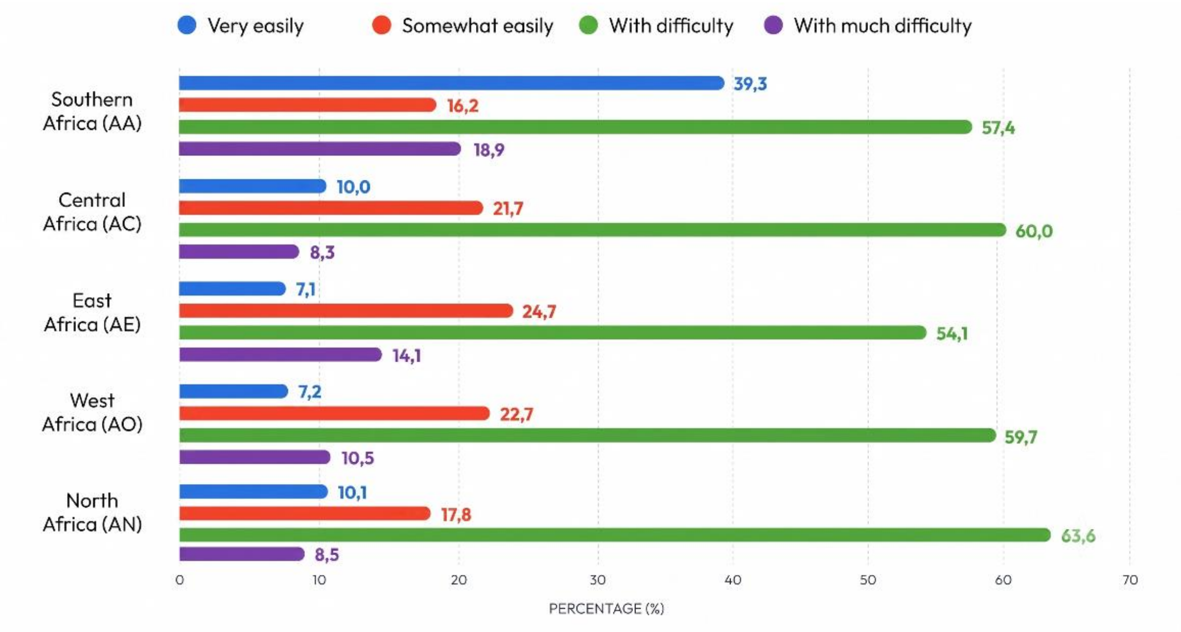
[33] African Union (2023). "African Passport and Free Movement of People Initiative". Addis Ababa.
[34] SADC (2023). «Protocol on the Free Movement of Persons in the Southern African Development Community».Gaborone.
[35] Africa Visa Openness Index (2023). «Recent Visa Policy Changes in African Countries». Johannesburg.

Graph 66: Access to information on artistic mobility



These figures reveal a major disparity : nearly 73 % of African artists face difficulties in accessing information on cultural mobility. This is consistent across all sub-regions : North Africa 72.2 %, West Africa 70.2 %, East Africa 68.2 %, Central Africa 68.3 %, Southern Africa 76.4 %.

Graph 67: Access to information by sub-region



This means that the majority of African artists who are potentially mobile do not have the basic information needed to plan and carry out transnational mobility.

The qualitative data confirm and shed further light on this situation. The interviews reveal that: “the vast majority of artists do not have adequate information regarding mobility procedures. Information is often unclear and not readily accessible to all”. This statement highlights that the problem is not simply a lack of information, but also its quality.

This information gap acts as an invisible yet significant barrier. Even if an artist has the necessary financial and administrative resources, without access to the appropriate information, they cannot identify opportunities, understand procedures, or navigate administrative requirements. Information is therefore a fundamental element of access to mobility, just as important as financial resources or administrative documents.

2.2 A Fragmented and Inefficient Information System

The lack of information on cultural mobility in Africa stems from a combination of factors that create a fragmented and inefficient communication system. The study identified several key, interlinked causes :

General lack of information and difficulty in accessing it: A majority of those interviewed agree that the vast majority of artists do not have adequate information regarding mobility procedures. The information is often unclear and not easily accessible to everyone.

Poor communication and ineffective channels: Communication on the subject is considered poor or insufficient. Although certain channels are used (websites, social media), their reach is not always optimal, particularly in rural areas where internet access is limited. The dissemination of information is sometimes limited to superficial posts on social media.

Language barrier: A significant proportion of the information is often available in English, which acts as a barrier for artists whose main language is Portuguese, French, Arabic or Swahili.

Complex administrative language: Where information is available, the administrative language used is often unsuitable and difficult for artists to understand, making procedures unclear.

Reliance on second-hand sources and lack of reliability: Artists often obtain information 'through the grapevine', which raises questions about the reliability and completeness of this information.

Inequalities in access: Artists based in rural areas or those who are not formally registered have more limited access to information, technology and support structures.

Lack of motivation and individual effort: A lack of motivation and effort on the part of some artists is also cited as a factor contributing to the lack of information.

Experience as a source of information: Only artists with repeated experience of mobility appear to be well-informed, whilst new and young artists are particularly vulnerable to a lack of information.

These factors create a fragmented and inefficient system in which information on cultural mobility is insufficient, unevenly distributed, difficult to understand and often unreliable. This system particularly disadvantages rural artists, young artists and those without prior experience of mobility.

3. Systemic barriers to mobility

3.1 Analysis of quantitative data

The analysis reveals that barriers to cultural mobility form an interconnected and hierarchical system in which financial, administrative, logistical, political and cultural challenges are intertwined. Rather than being isolated obstacles, these barriers function as a cascading filtering mechanism that determines which cultural actors can actually access transnational mobility. This systemic understanding is essential for developing effective and equitable policies. The qualitative analysis highlights several challenges and offers a new perspective on the mechanics of barriers to mobility:

Insufficient funding and high costs : The lack of adequate financial resources remains a well-identified obstacle to mobility for African artists. The high cost of travel (tickets, insurance, accommodation, etc.) makes this a major difficulty, and for some, the primary one.

Interviewee – Cape Verde

'The visa is a real problem (for Spain or Portugal) – it takes six months. No, I don't think they have the right information. My feeling is that they just post it on Facebook and that's it. Unless someone has been there before – say, in 2020, then went back in 2021, and again in 2022, and in 2023 – then they're already well informed about these matters. But for newcomers, teenagers and young artists, I don't think they're well informed about the processes and requirements."

Complexity and restrictions of visa schemes : Immigration policies and visa schemes are widely perceived as a major barrier to mobility. Obtaining visas is often a lengthy, costly and uncertain process, with cultural professionals not being given sufficient priority.

Cumbersome and complex administrative documentation : For lesser-known artists, the administrative documentation requirements for obtaining visas can be particularly onerous and dissuasive. According to those interviewed, some artists do not even have the basic administrative documents required for travel, which constitutes a fundamental obstacle to their mobility.

Respondent – Zimbabwe

"Yes, and this has created a lot of problems for Africans travelling between African countries because of the visa regime in Africa."

Poor air connectivity : Flight connections across the African continent are identified as a major barrier. Indirect routes, with frequent stopovers – sometimes outside the continent – make journeys long, costly and impractical.

Lack of coordination of schedules : The difficulty in accessing and coordinating the schedules of cultural activities in different African countries and around the world also poses a challenge for travel planning.

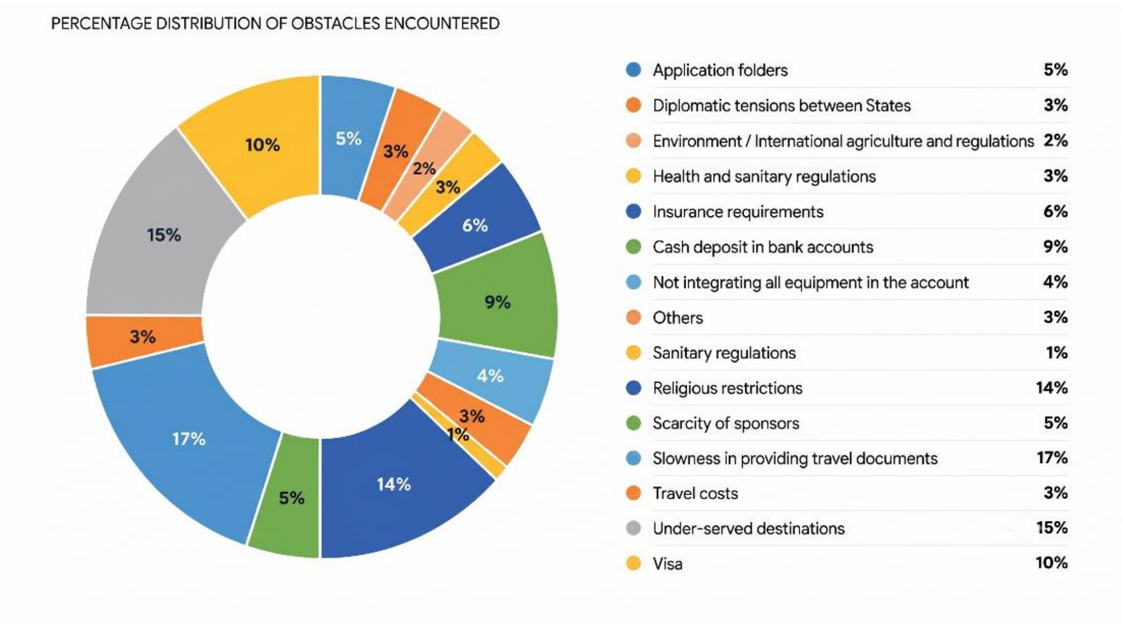
Mistrust and national restrictions : In some countries, mistrust of foreign artists and specific restrictions make it particularly difficult for them to enter the country.

Nuances: It should be noted that mobility may be easier within certain regions (Southern, Eastern and Central Africa) where visa requirements are less stringent. There is also a positive dynamic of collaboration and mutual invitations amongst African artists.

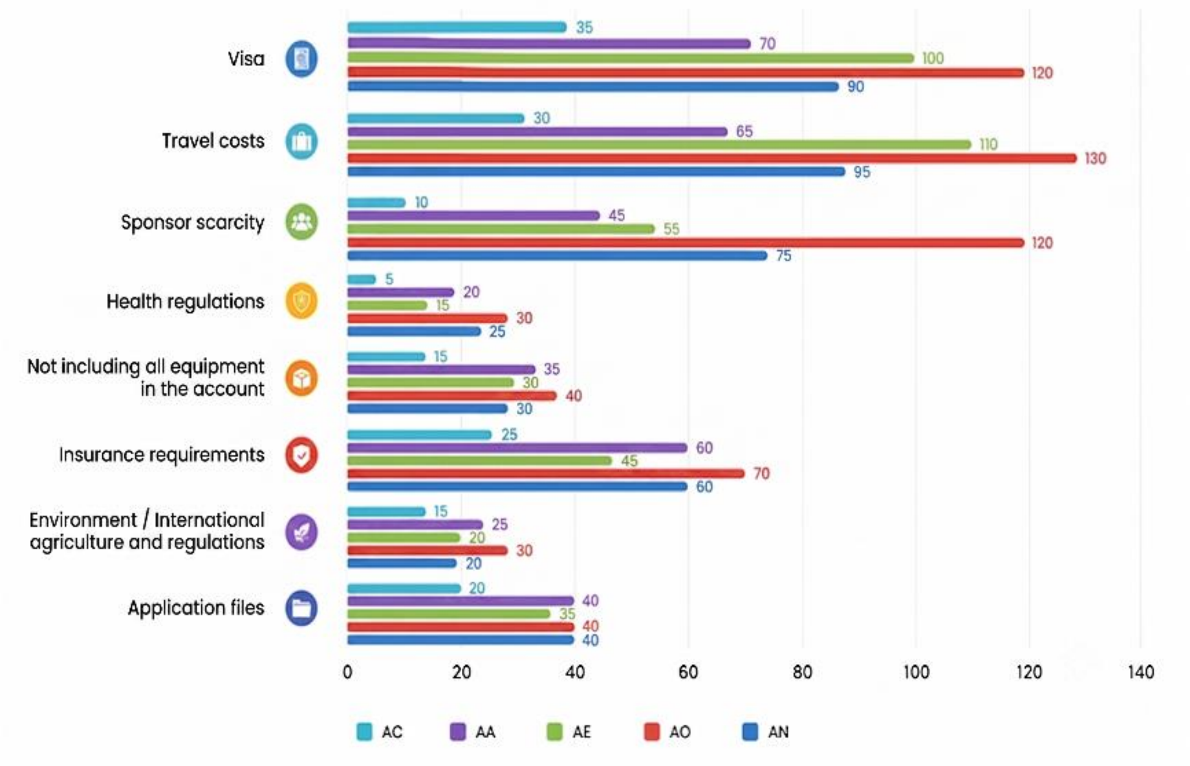
> *Respondent – Mali*
> *'But in terms of difficulties, it's mainly about funding. Ah, because the difficulty, generally speaking, lies in mobility and the ability to mobilise resources, as well as the schedule of activities in other countries.'*

The quantitative analysis of the questionnaire responses confirms the conclusions drawn from the qualitative interviews.

Graph 68: Main obstacles to mobility



Graph 69: Main obstacles to mobility by sub-region



The results reveal that administrative and financial barriers are the most significant barriers identified, accounting for over 60 % of all mentions, though with significant regional variations, revealing distinct patterns for each African sub-region.

Financial barriers (travel costs, bank deposits, scarcity of sponsors, etc.) are the most significant barrier, accounting for a substantial proportion of mentions. This barrier is exacerbated by the hidden costs resulting from poor air connectivity in Africa.

Administrative barriers (visas, travel documents, compiling application files) are the second most significant barrier. Compiling travel documents represents a major administrative barrier, as confirmed by both qualitative and quantitative data. The mentions 'visas and cumbersome application procedures' alone account for 22 % of all mentions.

Barriers such as political tensions, health restrictions, insurance issues and cultural factors further compound the difficulties of cultural mobility, depending on the region.

These barriers do not operate in isolation, but as an interconnected system of inequality:

- Stage 1: Financial Barrier. High costs (deposits, insurance, transport) create an initial selection process based on wealth.
- Stage 2: Administrative Barrier. Once the financial barrier has been overcome, cultural practitioners face complex administrative requirements (documentation, visas).

- Stage 3: Logistical Barrier. Poor air connectivity increases the costs and complexity of travel, creating an additional barrier.
- Stage 4: Political, Social and Cultural Barriers. Diplomatic tensions and national or religious restrictions act as a final filter, determining which practitioners are actually accepted and can completely block access to certain destinations.

Result: Only cultural practitioners who can navigate all these levels can achieve seamless mobility. This creates unequal and unfair mobility, where only an elite can truly travel.

3.2 MITIGATION MEASURES

Faced with barriers to mobility, cultural practitioners have developed strategies for adaptation and mitigation. Analysis of these measures reveals not only the resilience and creativity of African artists, but also the limitations of individual solutions in the face of structural obstacles.

The mitigation measures identified are varied and reflect different approaches: financial solutions, collaboration and networking, self-funding, institutional support, visa-related solutions, personal sacrifices, abandoning projects, and perseverance. Together, they reveal a complex landscape in which artists combine individual, collective and institutional strategies to navigate the obstacles to mobility.

3.1.1 Fundraising and self-financing

Among these strategies are: fundraising through concerts, the sale of merchandise, seeking international funding, and the use of crowdfunding platforms.

African artists are thus transforming their artistic practice itself into a means of funding their mobility. One artist organises a concert to raise the funds needed for a trip; another sells merchandise to finance an artist-in-residence programme.

This approach has significant limitations: (a) it depends on the artist's ability to generate income through their artistic practice, (b) it creates a cycle in which the artist must devote time and energy to fundraising rather than to artistic creation, and (c) it does not resolve the underlying problem: the structural barriers that make mobility costly and inaccessible.
The second major approach to mitigating financial barriers is, however, accessible only to artists with a certain degree of economic stability, which excludes the most precarious artists. Furthermore, self-funding creates a barrier to entry: only artists with personal resources can access mobility, which reproduces and amplifies existing economic inequalities.

3.1.2 Collaboration and Networking

A second major category of mitigation measures concerns collaboration and networking. Artists seek assistance from others, build networks with artists in other countries, collaborate with partners, and receive support from colleagues, friends or institutions.

This approach highlights the importance of social capital in cultural mobility. Artists with extensive networks—friends, colleagues, institutional partners—can mobilise this social capital to overcome obstacles. An artist with international contacts may find a partner to co-organise a project; an artist with friends in other countries may obtain logistical and administrative assistance.

This approach, too, creates a new form of inequality: inequality of social capital. Artists with extensive networks can access mobility more easily; artists without networks remain excluded.

3.1.3 Institutional Support

Artists seek support from ministries and international organisations, requesting letters from the government, diplomatic intervention, technical support, and so on. One artist may request a letter from the ministry to facilitate obtaining a visa; another may seek support from an international organisation to fund their mobility.

This approach highlights the importance of institutions in cultural mobility. Recognising that barriers to mobility cannot be overcome through individual efforts alone, artists therefore seek institutional support.

This approach is limited by the fact that it depends on the availability and willingness of institutions to provide support, and by the fact that it is accessible only to artists who have connections to institutions or who know how to navigate institutional structures. This inequality reinforces the stratification of artists, whereby only those with institutional connections can access mobility.

3.1.4 Visa-Related Solutions

Some artists seek institutional support, others professional assistance; still others develop flexible plans that enable them to adapt to administrative requirements.

This approach also highlights the limits of individual adaptation in the face of structural administrative barriers. An artist may devise a flexible travel plan, but this does not resolve the underlying problem: visa requirements are too complex and too costly. An artist may seek assistance from an immigration agency, but this adds further costs to mobility.

3.1.5 Abandonments and Unresolved Problems

Failure reveals the limits of individual and collective agency in the face of structural obstacles. The barriers to African cultural mobility are not simply individual challenges that can be overcome through personal effort, but structural problems that require systemic change.

Above all, however, failures have significant consequences for artists. An artist who abandons their mobility project may lose important opportunities, professional connections and momentum in their career. Obstacles to mobility are therefore not merely inconveniences, but barriers that can have major consequences for the career trajectories of African artists.

4. Analysis of Perceptions of Mobility

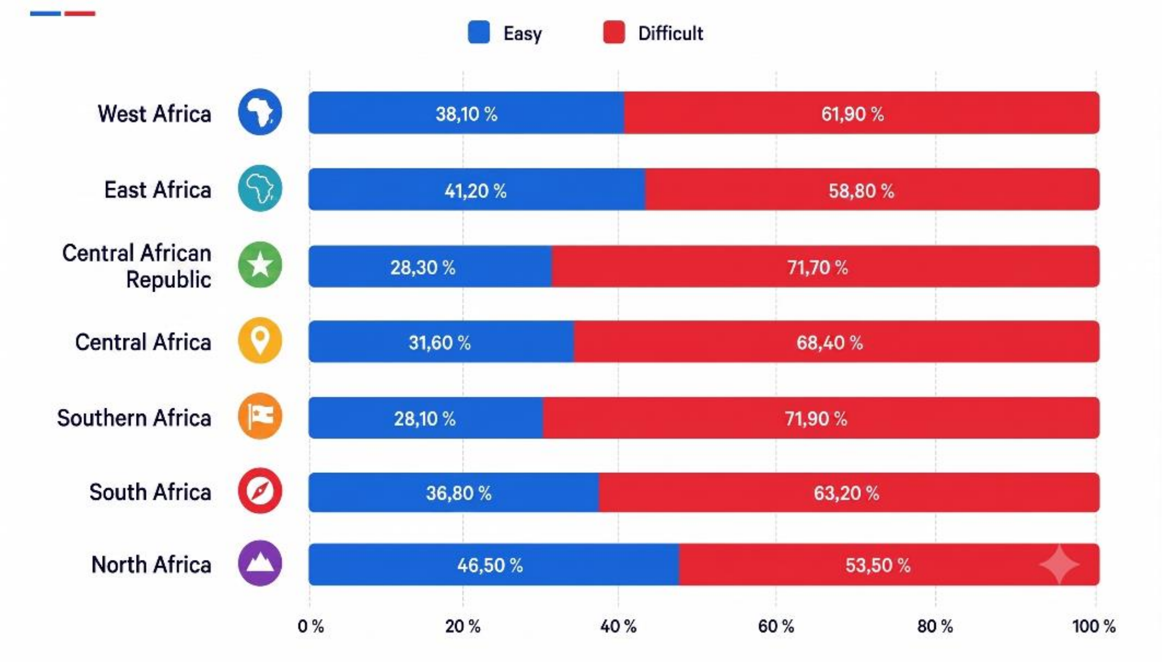
This section offers an interpretation of perceptions regarding the accessibility of African cultural mobility. It analyses the perceptions of African cultural practitioners regarding national, intra-African and international mobility, as well as international mobility to the Americas, Europe and Asia.

The findings reveal that African cultural mobility is a complex system shaped by colonial history, diasporas, external funding and transport infrastructure.

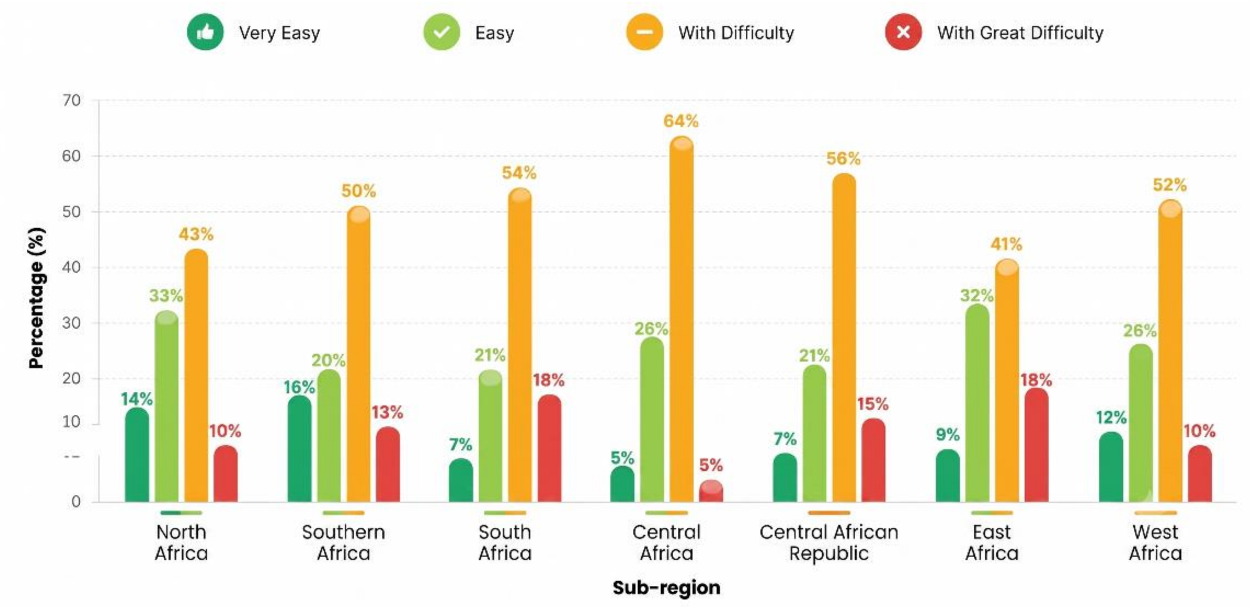
4.1 Perceptions of national mobility

The results show that national mobility is perceived as difficult in the majority of cases, with an overall difficulty index of 63.4 %. However, there is significant variation across sub-regions, with North Africa showing the most positive perception (46.5 % ‘easy’) and Southern Africa showing the most negative perception (28.1 % ‘easy’).

Graph 70: Ease Index by Sub-region:



Graph 71: Breakdown of perceptions – Domestic mobility



4.1.1 North Africa – Relatively Positive Perception

Although it has the highest positive rating on the continent, with an ease index of 46.5 %, the North Africa region has a difficulty rating of around 54 % (43.41 % of respondents find it 'difficult' and 10.08 % find it 'very difficult'). This discrepancy suggests that financial challenges persist and that there is a lack of structured programmes to support local mobility.

4.1.2 Southern Africa – Mixed Perceptions

Southern Africa has an ease of mobility index of 36.8 %. It has the most negative perception on the continent, with 63 % of respondents finding domestic mobility 'difficult' and 'very difficult'.

Within this group, South Africa has an even more negative perception, with an ease of mobility index of just 28.1 %, highlighting that South Africa, despite its economic development, faces significant challenges in terms of domestic mobility.

4.1.3 Central Africa – Very Negative Perception

Central Africa has the most negative perception of domestic mobility, with an ease of travel index ranging from just 31.6 % (Central Africa) to 28.3 % (Central African Republic). These regions have difficulty indices exceeding 68 %.

This very negative perception reflects the major infrastructure challenges in Central Africa, as well as security challenges and political instability in certain countries.

4.1.4 East Africa – Moderate Perception

East Africa has an ease of mobility index of 41.2 %. This moderate perception, compared with the previous sub-regions, reflects a relatively better transport infrastructure and the current positive momentum in the cultural and creative industries, although the region still faces significant challenges in terms of domestic mobility.

4.1.5 West Africa – Moderate Perception

West Africa has an ease of doing business index of 38.1 %. This region shows a similar perception to East Africa, but with greater variation between countries. This reflects variations in security (e.g. Mali and Burkina Faso versus Senegal and Nigeria, etc.), geography (countries with large land areas and difficult topographical accessibility) and infrastructure (railways and roads that can reduce the cost barriers to travel).

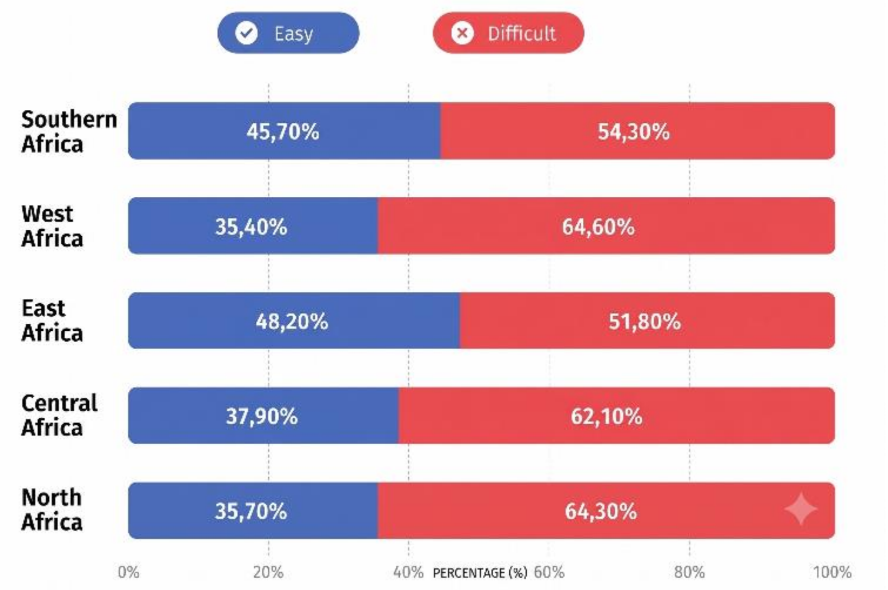
4.2 Perceptions of Intra-African Mobility

Analysis of perceptions of intra-African mobility reveals that mobility between African countries is generally perceived as difficult, with an overall difficulty index of 60.3 %.

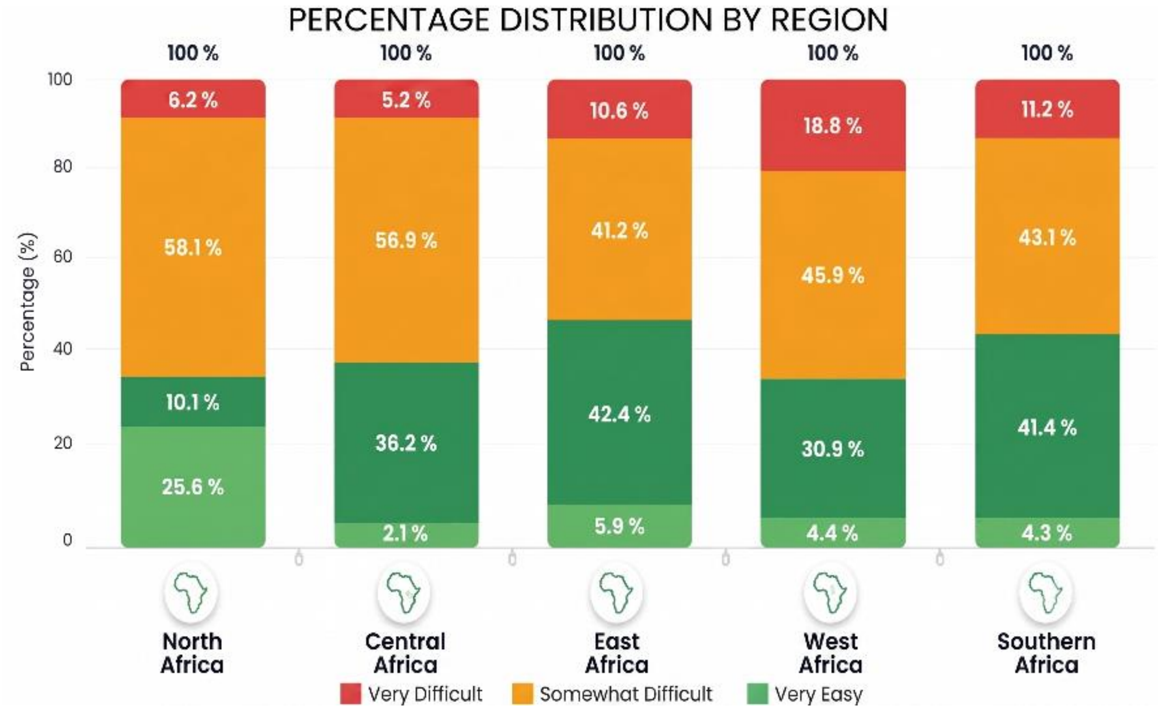
There is a very significant variation across sub-regions. East Africa has the most positive perception (48.2 % find it easy), in contrast to North Africa and West Africa, which have the most negative perceptions (35.7 % and 35.4 % find it easy, respectively).

Regional initiatives on free movement and administrative harmonisation, such as those in Southern Africa (SADC) or West Africa (ECOWAS), appear to have a positive impact on mobility in the regions concerned.

Graph 72: Ease of Movement Index by sub-region



Graph 73: Perception of intra-African mobility by sub-region



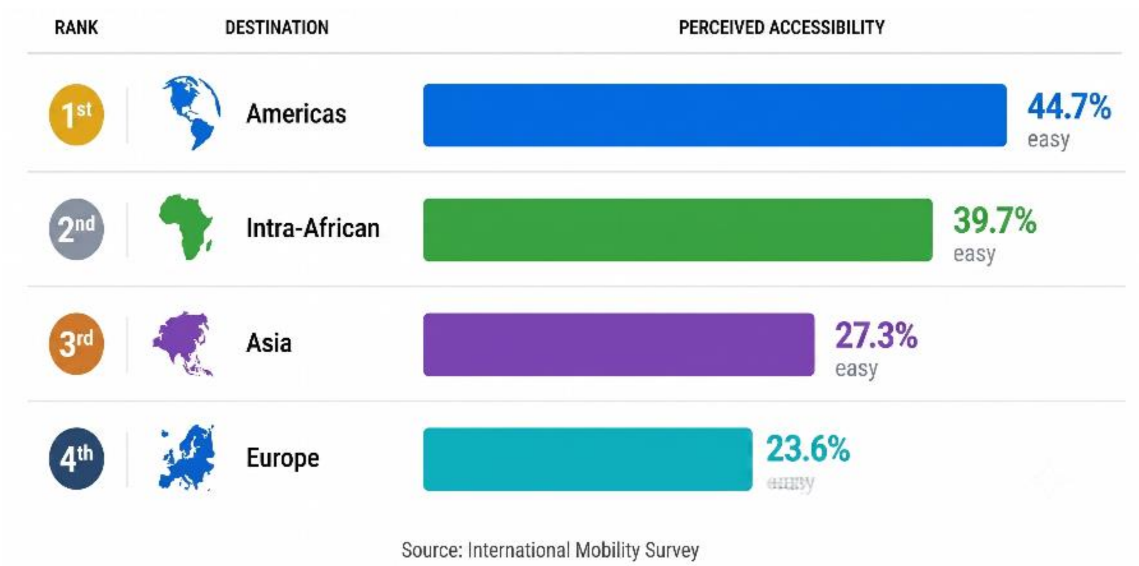
4.3 Perceptions of International Mobility

Each destination has a distinct profile determined by specific structural factors.

The Americas emerge as the most accessible destination (44.7 % ‘easy’). Europe shows lower accessibility (23.6 % ‘easy’) despite historical colonial links and significant financial aid. Asia shows moderate accessibility (27.3 % ‘easy’) despite the absence of historical links.

4.3.1 Global Ranking of Accessibility

Graph 74: Destinations’ ranking according to perceived accessibility for artistic mobility



4.3.2 Summary of Variations

Among the structural factors contributing to the observed variations in the perceived accessibility of mobility in Africa are:

1. **Well-Established Diasporas:** The Americas benefit from well-established diasporas, which facilitate mobility.

2. **Diasporic vs Colonial Links:** Diasporic links to the Americas are more effective than colonial links to Europe in facilitating cultural mobility.

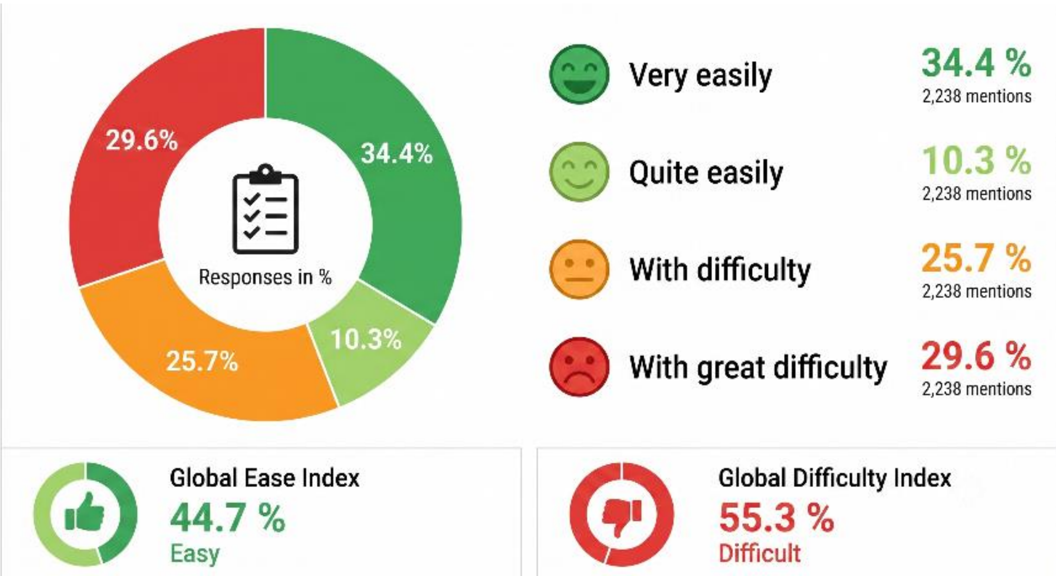
3. **Regional Variation:** Diasporas and regional protocols play a more significant role than geographical proximity.

4.3.3 Interpretation by destination

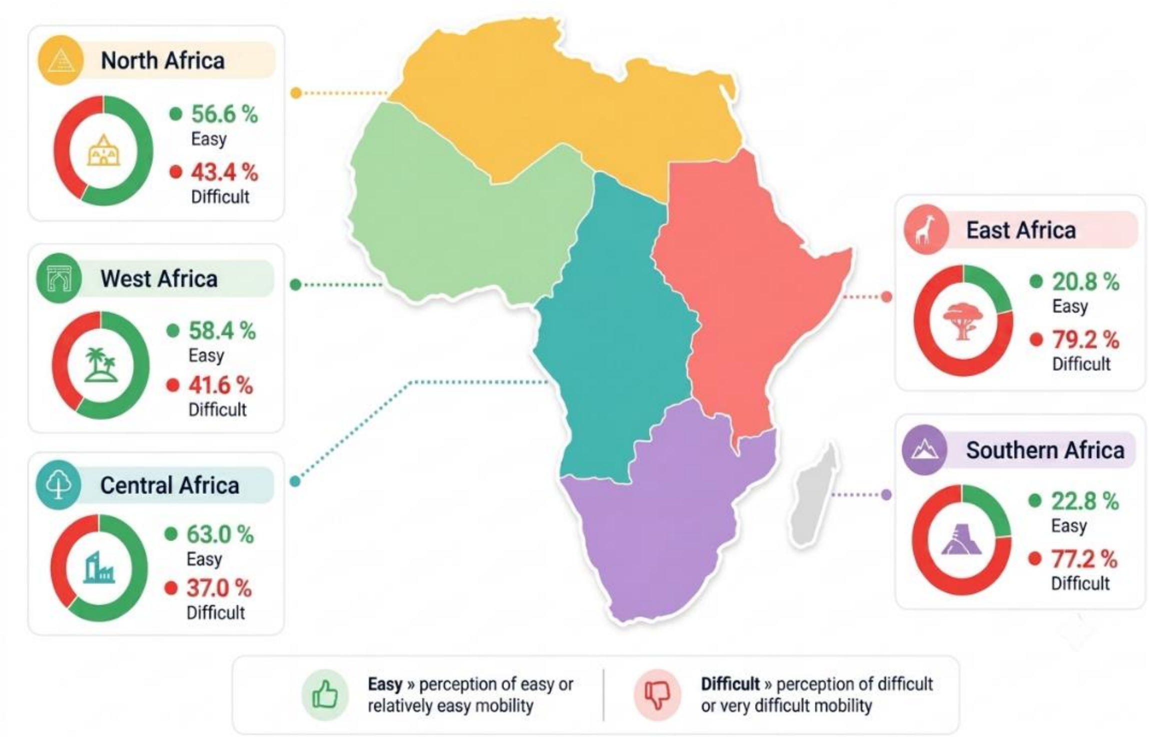
4.3.3.1 Mobility to the Americas

Analysis of perceptions of mobility to the Americas: the Americas are perceived as the most accessible international destination for African cultural actors, with an overall ease index of 44.7 %, contrasting sharply with mobility to Europe (23.6 % ease) and Asia (27.3 % ease). This therefore positions it as a destination with potential for the mobility of African cultural actors, although significant variations remain across sub-regions.

Global Statistics: the Americas



Interpretation by Sub-Region



Analytical Interpretation

The high perceived accessibility to the Americas (44.7 % easy) could be explained by several factors:

1. **Well-established African diasporas:** African diasporas in the Americas are well-established and visible, resulting from the transatlantic slave trade and subsequent immigration. These diasporas provide logistical, informational and financial support, facilitating mobility.

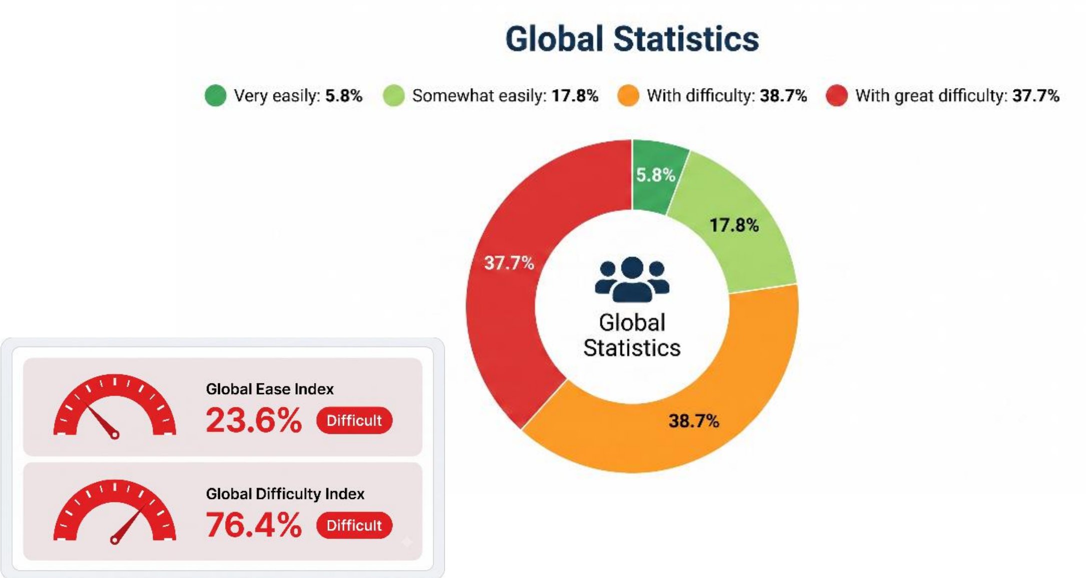
2. **Regional Variation:** West and Central Africa show very high perceived accessibility (58.4% and 63.0%), whilst East and Southern Africa show low accessibility (20.8% and 22.8%). This variation likely reflects differences in diaspora connections, the varying vitality of ICC ecosystems across Africa, and

3. **Differing diplomatic relations** with the USA in particular.

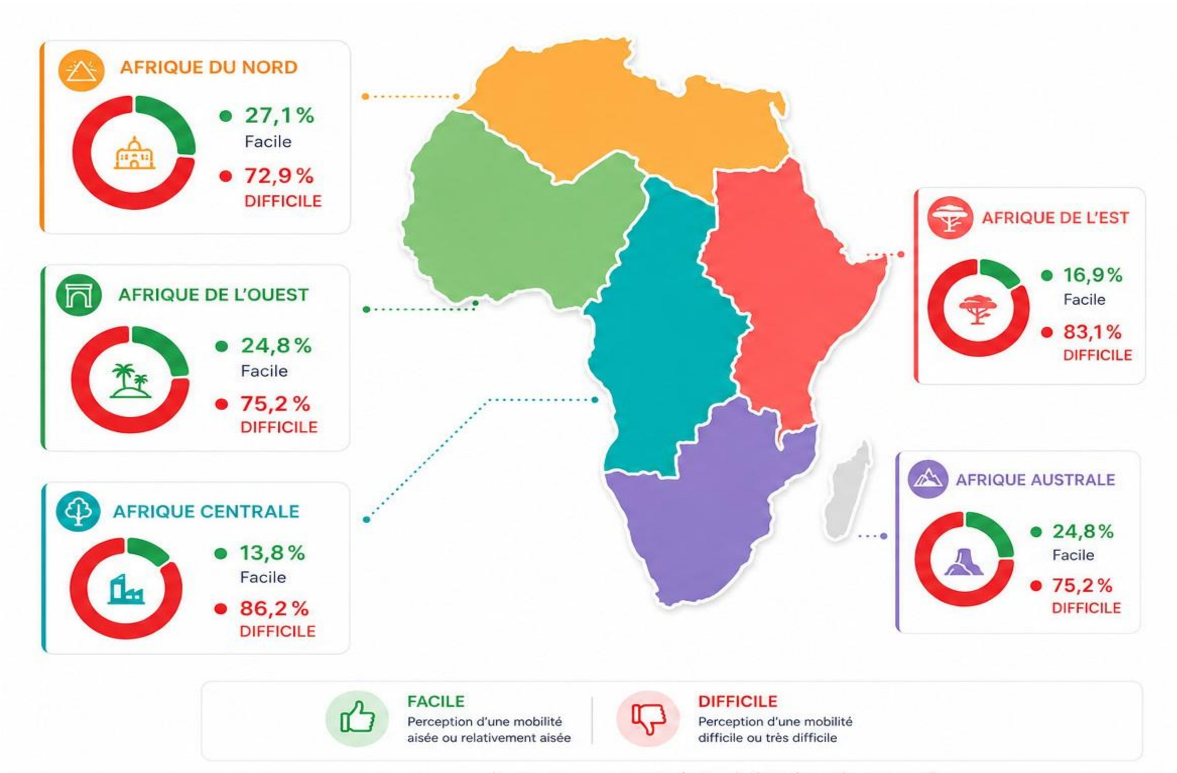
4.3.3.2 Mobility to Europe

The results show that mobility to Europe is perceived as the most difficult in the majority of cases, with an overall difficulty index of 76.4 %, compared with 55.3 % for the Americas and 72.7 % for Asia. Europe therefore represents a major barrier to the mobility of African cultural actors.

Overall Statistics: Europe



Interpretation by Sub-Region



Analytical Interpretation

Perceived accessibility to Europe (23.6 % 'easy') is the lowest of all destinations, despite significant historical colonial ties and substantial financial support for cultural cooperation.

High administrative and financial barriers: European (Schengen) visa procedures are complex, demanding and highly competitive, with onerous documentation requirements and long processing times.

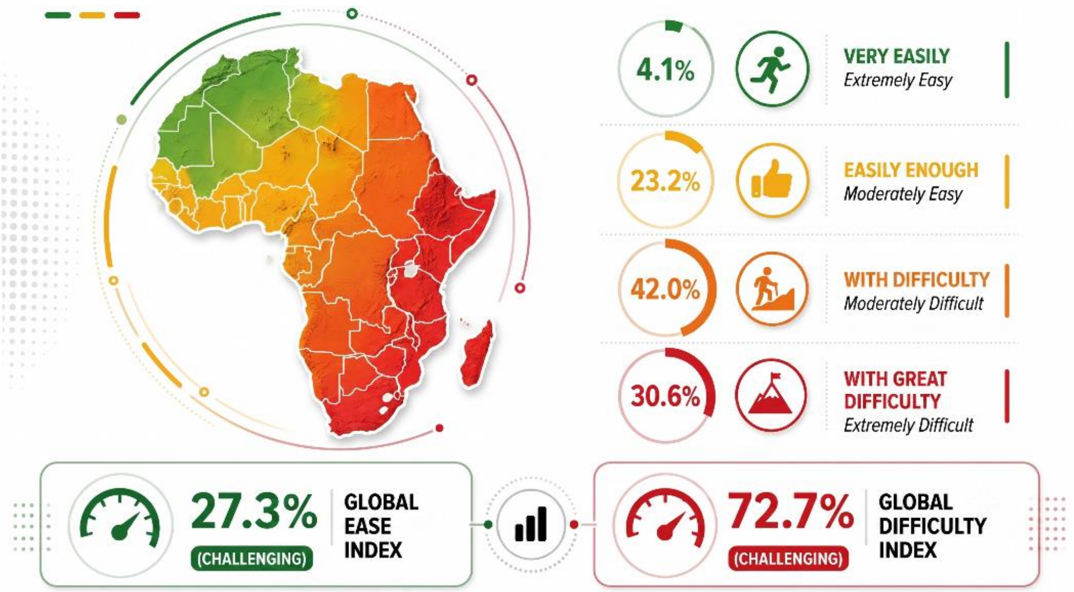
Significant regional variation: Central Africa has the lowest level of accessibility (14.8 %), whilst North Africa has a higher level (27.1 %), reflecting differences linked to the Mediterranean context and geographical proximity to Europe.

4.3.3.3 Mobility to Asia

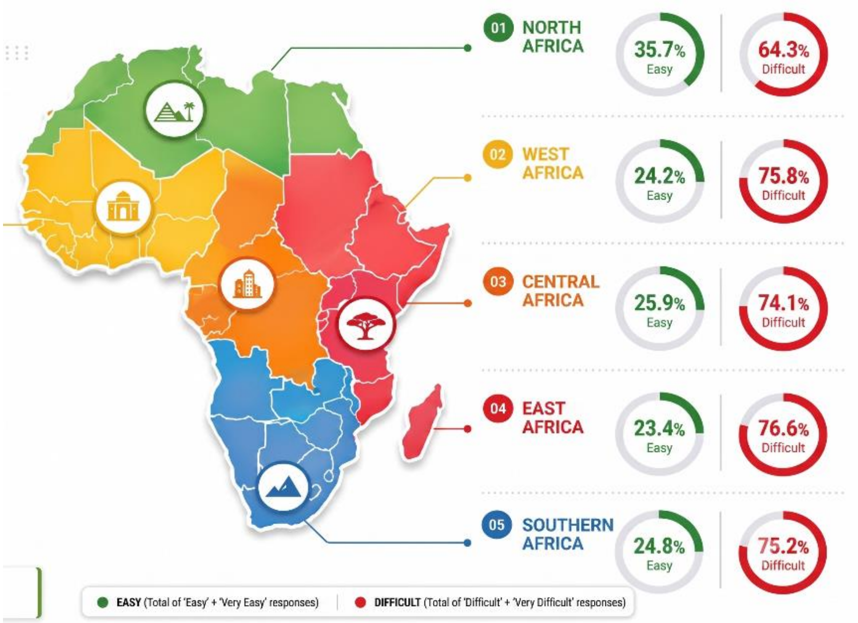
The results show that mobility to Asia is perceived as difficult, but with an overall difficulty index of 72.7 %, which is slightly less difficult than mobility to Europe (76.4 % difficulty) and slightly more difficult than to the Americas. Asia therefore presents a new and emerging opportunity for the mobility of African cultural actors.

There is variation across sub-regions, with North Africa showing the most positive perception (35.7 % easy) and East Africa showing the most negative perception (23.4 % easy).

Overall Statistics: Asia



Interpretation by Sub-Region



Analytical Interpretation

Perceived accessibility to Asia (27.3 % 'easy') is slightly higher than that of Europe but much lower than that of the Americas. The difference in attractiveness between these two growing mobility destinations could be explained by several factors:

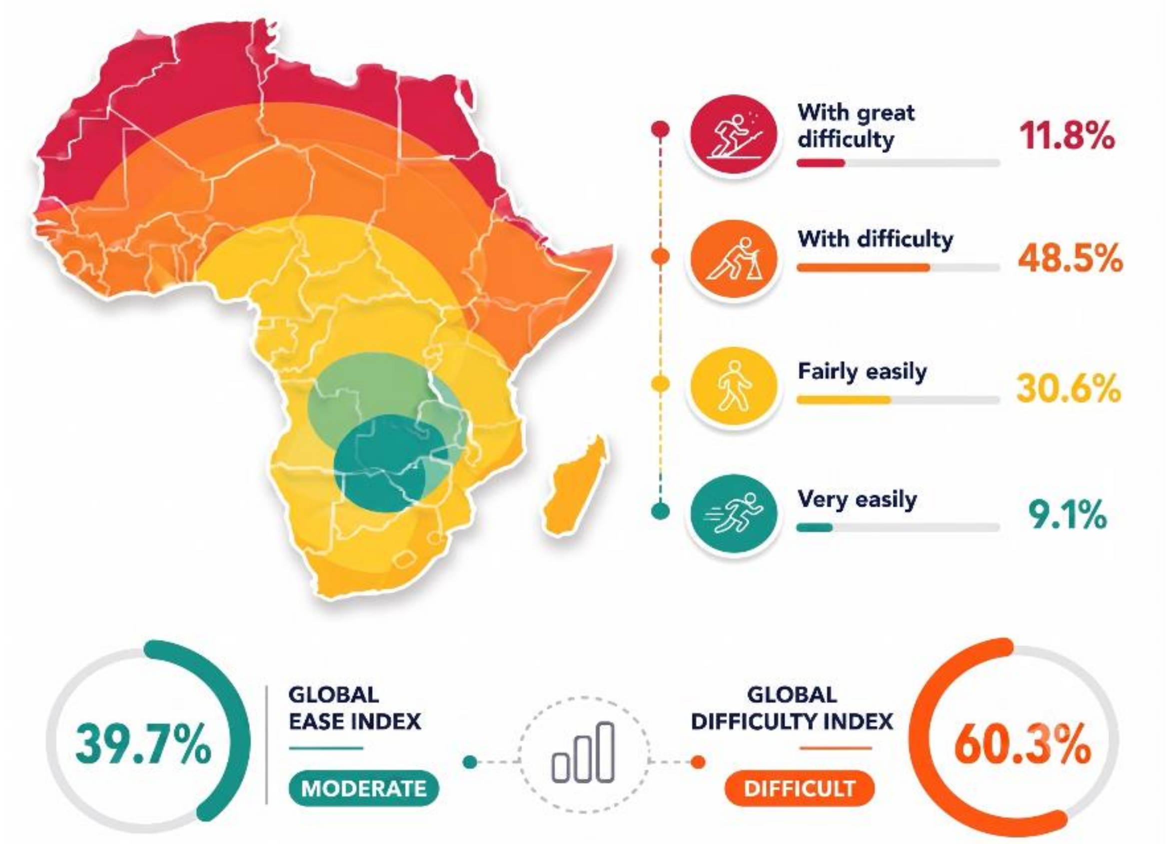
Lack of Historical Ties: Unlike Europe and the Americas, Asia lacks comparable historical and cultural ties with Africa, which limits connections and networks.

Developing Air Routes: Asia–Africa routes are benefiting from growing fare competition (Gulf airlines, Asian airlines), but these routes are less developed and less accessible than those to Europe and the Americas.

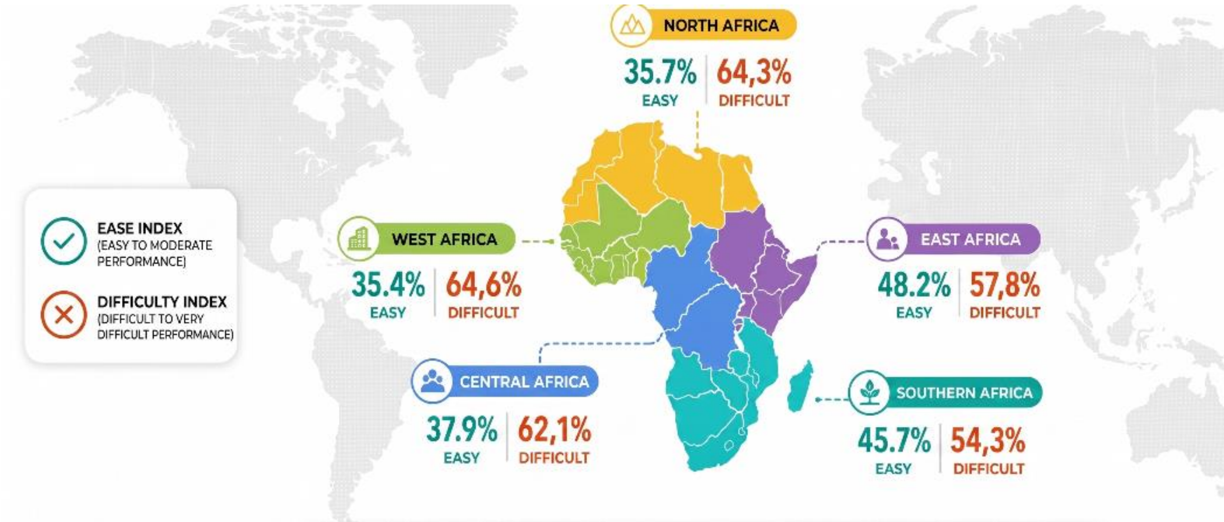
Asian Economic Growth: Asia offers growing economic opportunities for African cultural actors.

4.3.3.4 Intra-African Mobility:

Overall Statistics



Interpretation by Sub-Region



Analytical Interpretation

Despite geographical proximity, African cultural actors perceive mobility within the continent as just as difficult, if not more so, than mobility to other continents. The intra-African mobility index shows that 60.2 % of actors find this mobility difficult.

Regional variations are also significant, reflecting distinct regional dynamics. West Africa (35.4 %), Southern Africa (45.7 %) and North Africa (35.2 %) fall between these two extremes.

East Africa has the highest perceived difficulty rate (79.2 %), whilst Central Africa has the lowest (62.1 %). This variation reflects the diversity of obstacles.

These data confirm that intra-African mobility is shaped by factors that go beyond geographical proximity.

Three major structural barriers identified previously contribute to creating this situation where mobility within Africa is, paradoxically, more difficult than mobility to certain external destinations.

The first structural barrier concerns the excessively high airfares for intra-African travel. Direct intra-African flight connections are limited, forcing travellers to transit via hubs in Europe or the, thereby increasing costs and journey times.
As a result, it is often more expensive to travel between two African countries than to travel from an African country to Europe or the Americas.

The second structural barrier relates to the lack of accessible land transport infrastructure. Africa lacks integrated, secure and reliable land transport infrastructure. Unlike Europe, for example, where artists can travel by train, bus or car between countries, thereby reducing the financial barrier to mobility.

The third structural obstacle relates to the complex and non-harmonised administrative requirements for intra-African mobility. Each African country has its own visa requirements, its own application processes and its own processing times. An artist wishing to organise a tour across three African countries must navigate three different visa systems, which increases the complexity and cost of the journey.

V-RECOMMENDATIONS

TOWARDS A SOVEREIGN AND PRAGMATIC MODEL OF CULTURAL MOBILITY IN AFRICA

Throughout this study, we have sought to highlight evidence for an essential paradigm shift: artistic mobility in Africa can no longer be viewed primarily through the exclusive lens of aid, international flows or North-South cooperation. It constitutes a vital endogenous dynamic, a constant flow of talent that fuels the continent's creative economy. This dualistic view wrongly pits visible international funding (grants, North-South cooperation) against a supposed 'void' at state or local level.

The central hypothesis of our research challenges this paradigm: even in the absence of concrete data, the impact, scale and quality of local and endogenous support mechanisms are not only real but certainly significant. This 'shadow' ecosystem, often rendered invisible by evaluation frameworks and partial analyses, constitutes the true lifeblood of artistic circulation on the continent and deserves immediate institutional recognition as well as structural consolidation.

One of the major contributions of this work is that it has helped to highlight the scale and significance of intra-African mobility. This publication demonstrates that the absence of centralised statistical data does not imply a lack of initiatives. A critical volume of intra-African mobility is entirely supported by an organic and invisible infrastructure
: peer-to-peer support amongst artists, community-based micro-patronage, direct investment by independent promoters, and local funding and sponsorship.

However, this informal resilience has its limits. To move from subsistence-level mobility to a truly sustainable cultural industry, the public sector, the private sector and professionals must join forces around a pragmatic roadmap, focused on immediate feasibility.

1- OPERATIONALIZE WHAT IS ALREADY IN PLACE

Whilst comprehensive tax reforms and continental customs harmonisation remain long-term objectives, decision-makers must now support the exploitation of existing opportunities. Existing land mobility and visa facilities must be maximised and supported by policies and procedures that facilitate the production and distribution of the continent's cultural and creative goods and services. Four immediate areas for action emerge to consolidate this ecosystem:

Axis 1:
Systematise the 'Visa-Free First' approach

Faced with barriers arising from administrative delays and the costs and difficulties associated with visa regimes, the most effective response is to make even more strategic use of existing facilities and to synchronise mobility objectives and artistic schedules not solely on the basis of grants, but according to administrative efficiency and real market opportunities. The strategy would involve prioritising the design of seamless itineraries, i.e. those based on visa-free access or the speed of visa processing, alongside the simplification of customs procedures and regulations relating to cultural activities. Once this logistical certainty is secured, the itinerary must connect with major regional cultural hubs to capitalise on periods of economic peak activity.

Producers, artists, companies and programmers who, by necessity, already favour this strategy – where international funding schedules permit – must be supported to further consolidate their home bases, their creative residencies, research mobility, networking and training tours, and their tours in countries that have introduced a total visa exemption for African citizens.

This geographical sectorisation firstly helps to reduce a project's administrative costs whilst serving as a powerful lever of influence for African states. The economic impact of such a focus on 'visa-free' hubs and the benefits in terms of cultural diplomacy will send a strong signal to reluctant countries. By realising the cost of this missed opportunity, these countries will become even more aware of the loss, not only in financial terms but also in terms of cultural diplomacy and the continent's global influence.

By way of example, this model could be rolled out across continental routes – some easier than others, but all feasible:

1. **The West African bloc in the spring (FEMUA):** A low-cost road tour linking Lagos, Cotonou, Lomé and Abidjan, where ECOWAS protocols and exemptions granted by Togo and Benin eliminate any administrative friction.

2. **The East African hub in September (Blankets & Wine):** A Kigali–Kampala–Nairobi route that capitalises on the 48-hour processing of Electronic Travel Authorisations (ETAs) and the flexibility of local mobile ticketing technologies.

The West African road tour (Benin – Togo – Côte d'Ivoire)

Border formalities: This is the most straightforward part of the itinerary. If the artist and their team hold ECOWAS passports, free movement is complete and guaranteed by regional legislation. For Africans from outside the ECOWAS region, the total visa exemption in Benin and Togo ensures a smooth transit.

Performance permits: In Benin and Togo, the procedures with the Ministries of Culture or local councils for small and medium-sized events are quick and are often settled by mutual agreement or via local registration offices. In Côte d'Ivoire, for FEMUA, the advantage is that the team slots into an existing festival infrastructure which handles all national permits and security.

Technical equipment: This is the advantage of a road trip. Crossing the land borders from Cotonou and Lomé with musical instruments in a van or private coach is common practice, handled by transport operators familiar with customs procedures in the sub-region.

The East African crossroads (Rwanda – Uganda – Kenya)

Entry formalities: Rwanda and Kenya are leaders in digital bureaucracy. Kenya uses a straightforward Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA), whilst Rwanda offers a visa exemption for Africans, with specific categories for cultural professionals processed within 24 to 48 hours. Uganda issues an e-Visa online fairly quickly, particularly if you are invited by a major festival that has a fast-track arrangement with the immigration authorities.

Performance permits: In Kenya, the regulations are strict but transparent. Foreign artists must obtain a temporary work permit (often called a Special Pass) issued by the Immigration authorities, as well as a licence from the Kenya Film Classification Board (KFCB) if filming is planned. There is a fee, but processing times are predictable.

Finances: This is the easiest region for collecting ticket sales revenue thanks to the integration of Mobile Money (M-Pesa in Kenya, MTN Mobile Money in Rwanda and Uganda). Funds can be withdrawn or transferred quickly without having to go through cumbersome cross-border banking procedures.

Axis 2: Enhancing local organic infrastructure

The independent sub-regional cultural sector is also already aligned with existing flows; funding policies must adapt to this local dynamic rather than imposing external models. At sub-regional level, there are already active corridors that need to be consolidated and helped to take shape around the ICCs:

The North African Continental Circuit (Algeria – Tunisia – Libya)

The 'Visa-Free' lever: Visa exemption is complete and reciprocal between these three countries. This constitutes a bloc of territorial continuity that is unique in North Africa.

Feasibility and logistics: This circuit is entirely feasible by land. The road borders between Algeria and Tunisia, and between Tunisia and Libya, are major crossing points for goods and people. A cultural operator can run a tour bus or a lorry carrying technical equipment from Algiers to Tripoli via Tunis, which drastically reduces costs compared to air travel.

Market opportunity: Algeria provides the critical mass (45 million inhabitants) and a robust network of public infrastructure, whilst Tunisia acts as a technical incubator and post-production hub.

The Central African Triangle (Cameroon – Gabon – Congo)

Central Africa is often caricatured as the most closed-off region on the continent. However, the reality on the ground within the CEMAC (Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa) has changed radically.

The 'Visa-Free' lever: The visa exemption agreement is widely recognised and fully in force amongst nationals of these CEMAC countries. Furthermore, the Republic of the Congo has formalised a total exemption for all Africans.

Logistical feasibility: This is a road corridor currently undergoing rapid development. The road linking Cameroon to Gabon (via Ambam and Bitam) and the one linking Gabon to the

Republic of the Congo are major trade routes. Tour buses can travel from Yaoundé to Libreville by road. Furthermore, there is a train linking Tunis to Algiers via Annaba

Market opportunity: Cameroon provides the critical mass and talent pool; Gabon (Libreville) offers very high urban purchasing power; and Brazzaville serves as a historic hub for rumba and urban music, with excellent connections to Kinshasa just across the border.

The 'Mother of Borders' Circuit (Zambia – Zimbabwe – Botswana)

In southern Africa, apart from South Africa which acts as an administrative barrier, there is an extremely fluid loop.

The 'Visa-Free' advantage: These three SADC (Southern African Development Community) countries have extensive bilateral visa exemptions between them. Furthermore, Botswana and Zimbabwe have recently abolished the need for passports between their two countries; a simple national identity card is sufficient to cross the border.

Logistical feasibility: The road infrastructure there is amongst the best on the continent. The Kazungula Bridge provides a direct link between these markets. It is a perfect road trip route for technicians and equipment.

Market opportunity: Lusaka and Harare are bustling hubs for Afro-pop music and the spring festival circuit. Botswana (Gaborone) offers a stable economy and solid corporate budgets for private showcases.

The Western Trans-Saharan Corridor (Senegal – Gambia – Guinea-Bissau)

Within the wider ECOWAS circuit, there is a hyper-vibrant geographical micro-loop that operates as a closed circuit.

The 'Visa-Free' advantage: In addition to ECOWAS, The Gambia is 100 % visa-free for the entire continent. Linguistic, cultural (the Mandinka, Wolof and Fulani peoples) and geographical proximity break down all administrative barriers.

Logistical feasibility: Since the opening of the Senegambia Bridge, travelling by road from Dakar to Banjul takes just a few hours. Continuing on to Bissau is a very straightforward logistical route.

Market opportunity: This is the ideal itinerary, with Dakar serving as an international media hub, Banjul offering access to the English-speaking and tourism markets, and Bissau providing a unique cultural link to the Portuguese-speaking world.

Axis 3: Funding structured mobility

The aim is to design and adopt sustainable and optimal funding strategies. This involves moving away from the current practice of scattering micro-grants and instead providing financial support for career-focused projects where mobility is seen as a lever for development and consolidation, rather than merely a temporary move in response to an immediate need.

This will enable support for multifaceted or multi-objective mobility projects that optimise travel by combining networking, market exploration, touring, creative work and so on. These pathways must be optimised in the context of regional, continental or local circuits, be grounded in on-the-ground realities and guided by a commitment to sustainability and efficiency.

Thus, a funding mechanism offering, for example, support for an annual mobility plan proves to be far more sustainable. This scheme could, in particular, be backed by a matching fund programme in order to actively involve the private sector.

At the same time, the financial ecosystems for artistic mobility in Africa could be strengthened through the following measures:

- Creating 'Rapid Mobility Funds' at local, regional and international levels

- Set up agile funding schemes (with a response within 30 days) dedicated exclusively to covering airfares and visa fees. The current administrative delays often cause artists to miss out on opportunities for international programming. This can be achieved by public institutions or private organisations adopting cascading funding strategies.

- Redirect resources and funding towards South-South mobility at the continental level: Rebalance funds, which have historically been focused on the promotion of African artists in Europe, to also fund intra-African tours and residencies.

- Support 'long-term' mobility and encourage research whilst continuing to fund the presentation of performances and/or finished productions, it is essential to systematically incorporate periods dedicated to research, design and project preparation.

Axis 4: Developing practical financial engineering

Barriers to accessing finance, insufficient resources and the inadequacy of the support mechanisms in place are, in part, the result of a lack of skills and professionalisation in the fields relating to financial engineering for CCIs.

African ecosystems lack expertise and training in the financing of CCIs, both for professionals in the sector and for staff at public institutions. For example, to date, there is no training or accredited qualification in Africa for fundraisers or resource mobilisation in the cultural sector. This crucial skill is still taught only marginally and sporadically, at the conclusion of development projects or as part of modules on cultural management and incubation.

However, devising funding strategies and recruiting and educating philanthropists or investors is a profession in its own right that requires a full-time commitment. It is also the cornerstone for informing and guiding public policies on funding for cultural mobility and the CCI in general, and for providing cultural operators with viable and sustainable structural support.

It is therefore necessary to support the emergence and professionalisation of this field. The challenge is to make advisory and funding support skills for mobility projects and activities vital to the CCI in Africa available and accessible at the highest levels of professionalisation.

2. STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Recommendations Addressed to Intergovernmental Institutions

Advocacy for an 'African Cultural Passport' at the continental level: to exempt accredited arts professionals from the barriers associated with short-stay visas within the continent. This could be achieved by accelerating the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) by incorporating a specific component for cultural services.

At the international level: Harmonising bilateral agreements by applying a principle of asymmetric reciprocity or preferential treatment in trade agreements with countries of the North. This could be achieved, for example, by making the hosting of international productions on the continent conditional upon simplified visa procedures (refusal rates, costs, processing times) for African artists on tour.

Establishment of a 'Pan-African Mobility Observatory': Fund the ongoing collection of quantitative and qualitative data (visa refusal rates, economic flows, economic impact of tours) to support political negotiations with statistical evidence. Consolidate and build on existing initiatives such as the African Mobility Information Hub: www.africamobilityinfopoint.com

2.2 Recommendations for Local Authorities and Line Ministries

Decentralise performance venues at national level: Invest in small and medium-sized performance venues outside capital cities. The aim is to create performance circuits to foster the development of fluid national mobility (regional tours) that are structuring and professionalising, prior to international touring.

Artists' status and tax framework: Legalise and formalise the status of cultural professionals to facilitate the obtaining of administrative documents (proof of employment, tax forms) required by foreign consulates.

Offer structural support: Supplement financial support with technical support to assist artists with administrative procedures, finding partners, networking, strategic advice, facilitation and coordination with the country's embassies in destination countries, etc.

To structure and monitor existing mobility initiatives.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study argues that the consolidation and promotion of cultural and creative mobility in Africa does not depend on the creation of new structures from scratch, but on the recognition, intelligent and sustainable funding, and networking of what already exists. The African artistic ecosystem has its own foundations : the task now is to understand them and establish them on a sustainable footing. By leveraging three strategic levers — the effective implementation of regional free movement policies, the professionalisation and financial empowerment of stakeholders, and targeted support for local cultural spaces — the continent can establish a truly endogenous model of mobility. This model, which is resilient and connected to local realities, will mark a crucial step towards Africa's cultural sovereignty, by breaking free once and for all from the logic of aid and the fluctuations of international assistance.”

"Acknowledging the efforts of unsung local actors is not merely a matter of scientific justice; it is the indispensable prerequisite for reclaiming cultural sovereignty."- Ouafa Belgacem

CULTURE MOVES AFRICA

Mapping of African artistic mobility

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