

Priorities for the live performance sector

ON THE EUROPEAN STAGE 2024-2029

Join us on the road to champion the passion for live performance...



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1 The innovative power of artistic creation

...by providing policies which facilitate the following five paths to empower the live performance sector on the European stage:

- 1 the innovative power of artistic creation
- 2 live performance made by and for humans
- 3 championing greening and sustainability
- 4 cherishing cultural exchange and its mobility
- 5 embracing digital and technological development

... and in all instances remove obstacles and replace them with a supporting environment by smoothing out processes.

  This paper aligns with the Council's strategic agenda of 28 June 2024 and the Commission's political guidelines presented to the European Parliament on 18 July 2024.

From an early age, we are encouraged to develop our creative skills. Today, the professional world is in desperate need of creative minds. We all admire centuries-old masterpieces and enjoy new creations in venues, theatres, festivals, community houses, our towns and cities, our homes, and online.


Europe's richest asset is its culture, which deserves to be showcased to the world while also requiring protection and preservation.


To nurture the innovative power of artistic creation and align with the Council's strategic agenda and the Commission's political guidelines, we urge policymakers to include culture and the arts in their innovation and research strategies.

Experimentation, exploration, and testing are integral components of the artistic process before it is ready for public display. A dedicated R&D budget for artistic innovation would address this specific need effectively.

➔ Join us on our path to facilitating an environment for artistic innovation in a context of European policy on prosperity, and democracy by:

- Guaranteeing **cultural diversity** through concrete actions and (cultural) funding
- Adapting curricula to include **creative skills** in general, and into STEM education programmes, to learn out-of-the-box thinking, empathy, and a problem-solving mindset
- Acknowledging the artistic creation processes to be truly **research and innovation-based** and foreseeing specific support programmes
- Ensuring that organisations, including those relying on state or regional funding, have **independence and autonomy** in their artistic programming
- Protecting **freedom of artistic expression** and recognising it as a democratic value

 Council's strategic agenda – "A prosperous and competitive Europe – promoting an innovation and business-friendly environment"

 Commission's political guidelines – "A new plan for Europe's sustainable prosperity and competitiveness"

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Live performance made by and for humans



Live performance, being highly labour-intensive, relies on people as our most valuable resource. As employers, we are dedicated to facilitating work under fair conditions for our employees and collaborators, adhering to existing laws.

Social dialogue is the best tool for creating a level playing field for those in the sector, and we appreciate the EU's commitment to enhancing efforts alongside member states, which will lead to more tangible outcomes.

We also welcome the EU's continued focus on the European Pillar of Social Rights. The artistic community urgently needs secure access to social protection to address gaps, especially for those with flexible careers and statuses.


Live music, theatre, dance, and other forms of live artistic expression reach thousands of people daily, offering a unique experience. We applaud the EU's attention to younger generations, as they are the foundation of our society, and learn by engaging in and discovering cultural live events.


In this regard, we hope the Commission's planned initiatives for the mental well-being of young people will include recognising the role of live performance.

Furthermore, inclusion of minorities, gender equality, and anti-racism are European goals that the live performance sector fully supports and is committed to implementing policies where it can.

→ Join us on our path to realise a human-centered ecosystem for the live performance sector as part of society by:

- Designing effective **audience development strategies**, whether for live audiences or online
- Providing **young generations** access to intangible cultural heritage, as our history builds on centuries-old stories, music, theatre and dance
- Rewarding and honouring live performance organisations that reach out to young people and allow them to develop their talents and experience the value of artistic practice as part of their **mental well-being**
- Endorsing **autonomous social dialogue**, between employers and workers, also in the public sector, as a way to create a level playing field on working conditions in the sector and respective countries
- Understanding that **social protection systems need urgent reform** to fit the flexible careers and statuses of artists and cultural professionals to ensure stable access to social protection and benefits
- Paying particular attention to labour-intensive sectors, such as the live performance, which requires **targeted policies** to attract skills, manage oversupply, and make it possible for the sector to thrive by facilitating low VAT, taxes and duties, costs for licenses, or by providing specific tax benefits, or other schemes
- Developing access to **career guidance**, coaching, counselling, and mental well-being support for artists in every country.
- Supporting health and safety initiatives in the sector.
- Providing dedicated funding schemes to implement **diversity, gender equality, and inclusion** both in the workplace and beyond.
- Honouring the value of **social cohesion** through the collaboration with volunteers in live performance organisations, especially of the ageing population, as a way to overcome solitude with elderly people and address demographic challenges
- Creating a framework for people to obtain a **wide set of skills** allowing them to work in a multi-disciplinary and diverse environment, through the provision of lifelong learning **training opportunities**

 Council's strategic agenda – "A free and democratic Europe"

 Commission's political guidelines – "Supporting people, strengthening our societies and our social model"

Championing greening and sustainability

The live performance sector has enthusiastically embraced the Green Deal, recognising the vital role that individuals and companies play in achieving climate neutrality by 2050. The green transition involves education, training, understanding, and learning, engaging everyone within an organisation and its relationships with suppliers, audiences, sponsors, and funders. This effort aligns with the Commission's policy goals for the coming year on energy, infrastructure, waste, the circular economy, water, food, and more.


Culture has been acknowledged as a powerful tool for raising awareness about sustainability. To this end, specific joint actions within the sector should be incentivised through dedicated funding and targeted instruments, helping companies develop sustainability plans and policies.

Including “access to culture” in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is essential and should stand alongside existing SDGs. For example, the goal of “eradicating poverty” is also linked to providing access to culture from early childhood through seniority, as experiencing culture fosters a sense of belonging to society.

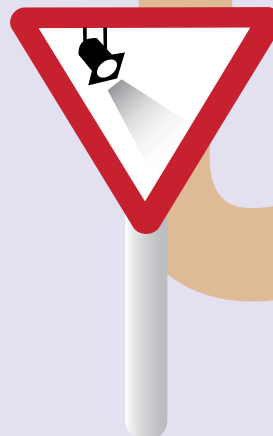
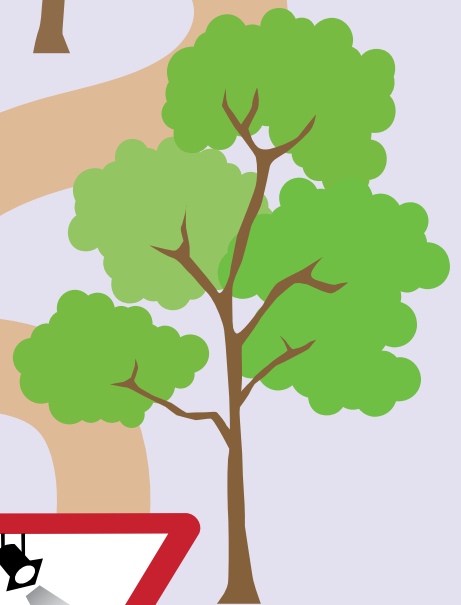
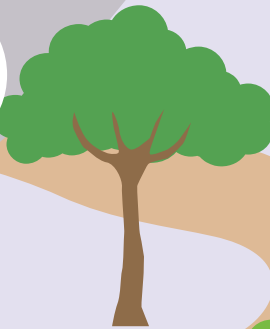
➔ Join us on our path to contribute with the means at our disposal to help maintain a planet for many generations to come by:

- Ensuring legislation fit for purpose and based on the expertise of the sector, such as **stage lighting**, thereby extending the exemption in the eco-design regulation
- Including the sector's expertise to ensure that **technical production facilities** such as **wireless microphone technology** can continue to be used in the UHF in a secured and protected way
- Providing **supporting tools to SMEs**, which may be affected by regulations they are exempt from, such as the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive
- Providing a **Europe-wide coordinated approach to greening in the cultural and live performance sector**, allowing for visible and documented results

- Ensuring **skills development**, compulsory inclusion of sustainability courses in education, training in the workplace, specific modules, and accompaniment of change of attitude
- Incentivising **research** about innovative production methods to develop recycling models, finance and foresee shared storage places for sets, and experiment with new ways of creating
- Supporting the cultural sector to include culture in the **SDG post-2030** as **access to culture for all** is a target to be defended in several of the goals

 Council's strategic agenda – “A prosperous and competitive Europe – making a success of the green and digital transitions”

 Commission's political guidelines – “A new plan for Europe's sustainable prosperity and competitiveness – a clean and industrial deal”



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Cherishing cultural exchange and its mobility



Cultural exchange, cross-border cooperation, touring, and mobility are integral to live performance. For centuries, artistic touring has held both diplomatic and economic significance, building ties between countries and their citizens and fostering a diversity of cultural expressions. It remains a powerful testament to Europe's unity in diversity and its connection with cultural communities.


We welcome the EU's commitment to further integrating the single market. A single market for services, including culture, importantly involves reducing administrative burdens related to social security, worker postings, artist taxation, labour permits, and visas for third-country nationals. Additionally, it addresses other service-related challenges, such as travelling with musical instruments, touring materials as own-account transportation, VAT, copyright clearance, and health and safety regulations, which vary from country to country or are inadequately adapted.


Establishing cultural relations with the UK - our former neighbour -, with Ukraine and other neighbouring countries, as well as considering culture in trade agreements and external relations with other parts of the world, should be an integral part of trade discussions. Special attention should be given to the USA, where European live performers face imbalanced market access due to strict visa policies compared to US artists touring the EU.

If the EU is considering developing policies for legal migration pathways, it is crucial to put a focus on temporary legal migration for work purposes. This approach is necessary to provide a coordinated strategy for third-country national artists touring or staying for short periods in one or more EU member states.

➔ Join us on our path to a European single market that facilitates artistic mobility and enhances cross-border cultural cooperation in EU's external relations and trade partners by:

- Increasing the **funding budget** for cultural cooperation and mobility projects, both small and large, which are in great demand by cultural actors
- Rethinking the practical functioning of social security coordination regulation for highly mobile artists by developing **smart digital solutions** that result in a win-win for all
- Being pragmatic on **very short-term posting** and concretising the commitment to reduce administrative burdens for SMEs and simplify legislation
- Making sure that **visas for third-country nationals** do not hinder touring to European audiences but are seen as opportunities for growth and an offer to enrich cultural diversity
- Rethinking the **90/180 day rule** which hinders both visa-required and visa-exempt artists and makes it highly complicated and costly to tour non-European groups for European producers
- **Abolishing double artist taxation** in particular for employees and self-employed earning below a threshold of 18 000€
- Considering specific and targeted solutions that smoothen **cultural exchange with the UK**
- Finalising in Council the revision of the Air Carrier Liability Regulation 2027/97 by including a specific provision on **travelling with musical instruments**, and ensuring appropriate legislation for musicians to take instruments on trains
- Ensuring exemptions for **musical instruments containing CITES-protected species**, removing administrative burdens and limiting the financial impact of obtaining certificates
- Ensuring that member states can apply low /zero/ exempt **VAT for culture** and that there is an encouraging policy of the EU in this regard

 Council's strategic agenda – “A strong and secure Europe – ensuring coherent and influential external action; - pursuing a comprehensive approach to migration”

 Commission's political guidelines – “A new era for European defence and security – standing fair and firm on migration.”; “A global Europe: leveraging our power and partnerships”



Embracing digital and technological development



For centuries, the live performance sector has embraced new technologies to achieve the seemingly impossible on stage. The phrase “deus ex machina” originates from the performing arts practice. Today, audiences experience cutting-edge technologies employed by highly creative technicians, including virtual reality, augmented reality, AI, holograms, digitally-driven lighting, sound, and stage techniques.

Digital technology is also vital for communication, data management, efficient production processes, planning, and more. There is a significant need for digital skills at all organisational levels and collaboration with tech experts passionate about the arts.


Since the COVID crisis, live performance organisations have discovered the potential of streaming, which has become a part of the product mix for music bands. However, streaming remains a challenging business model due to high investment costs, complex copyright clearance processes and limited financial gain for organisations.


Digital tools and streamlined administrative processes with public authorities are crucial for live performance organisations, especially when undertaking cross-border touring and cultural exchanges. Pearle* welcomes the EU’s Digital Decade strategy concerning public governance and looks forward to concrete initiatives to reduce administrative burdens. It is essential to focus on easing burdens related to the free movement of workers, including cross-border social security, posting, artist taxation, VAT, visas, and work permits. If the EU aims to tackle administrative burdens in the services sector, it should include those related to workers.

Addressing these challenges is crucial for facilitating cultural exchanges and ensuring the continued vitality of the live performance sector.

→ Join us on our path to reaping the benefits of digital tools, data exchange and digital developments by:

- Empowering the sector to develop digital tools that create new experiences and ensure **access to culture** for all citizens.
- Providing support, **funding and investment for digital archives** of live performances for the people of today and the generations to come
- **Simplifying compliance with regulations** through the provision of digital tools for companies and individuals, and good public governance
- Prioritising the development of digital tools and access to platforms in a European coordinated way regarding the **mobility of workers** (social security/posting)
- Abolishing the excessive or double **artist taxation** for performing abroad which is no longer of relevance due to the administrative cooperation and digital exchanges of information between tax authorities, allowing performing artists to be treated in a similar way as other workers.
- **Incorporating in impact assessments** the challenges for compliance for enterprises when drafting new legislation and from the beginning reflecting on ways to smooth administrative processes and where possible in a European coordinated way
- Supporting live performance organisations wishing to develop a streaming platform the **necessary infrastructure and investment** to be the owner of the platform and reduce the dependence on large dominant platforms
- Helping in the **fight against piracy** of streaming of live events and unfair **reselling of tickets** practices through strong enforcement mechanisms

 Council’s strategic agenda – “A prosperous and competitive Europe – making a success of the green and digital transitions”

 Commission’s political guidelines – “A new plan for Europe’s sustainable prosperity and competitiveness – boosting productivity with digital the diffusion”; “Protecting our democracy, upholding our values – putting citizens at the heart of our democracy”

PEARLE*-LIVE PERFORMANCE EUROPE IS REPRESENTED IN VARIOUS BODIES AND COMMITTEES, INCLUDING:

- Observer status with WIPO (World Intellectual Property Organisation)
- Member of the CITES Standing Committee working groups on Annotations and Electronic systems and information technologies.
- Member of the stakeholder group on protection of species, facilitated by DG Environment
- Member of the International Music Sector Coalition on CITES
- Registered as an employers' organisation by ILO (International Labour Office) with observer status at the International Labour Conference;
- Member of EEN (European Employers' Network) facilitated by BusinessEurope
- Established by the European Commission as the Social Dialogue Committee "Live Performance" together with the European Arts & Entertainment Alliance (EAEA), representing FIM (International Federation of Musicians), FIA (International Federation of Actors) and Uni- MEI (Media Entertainment International).
- Member of the social dialogue Liaison Forum group, facilitated by DG Employment
- Co-founder and coordinator of the European Entertainment Technology Coalition (theatre lighting)
- Member of the expert group Ecodesign and Energy Labelling Consultation Forum (EELCF), facilitated by DG Energy
- Member of WSG Wider Spectrum Group, facilitated by BNE
- Member of the Live Content Coalition, facilitated by the Football Association Premier League
- Member of the European Internet Forum EIF seated at the European Parliament
- Registered as a Civil Society Stakeholder with DG External Trade
- Member of the DAG Domestic Advisory Group on the EU-UK TCA agreement
- Member of the EU Operators Forum on the Security of Public Spaces, facilitated by DG Home
- Founding member of Culture Action Europe
- Part of the annual ILMC Associations Summit
- Member of the Commission expert group on Cultural Heritage, facilitated by DG Culture
- Part of the Cities & Regions Network of the EIT KIC Culture & Creativity
- Member of the Commission Ecodesign and Energy Labelling Consultation Forum
- Involved in Voices of Culture (thematic), Music Moves Europe, Theatre stakeholder group
- Enlisted on the transparency register of the European Commission
- Regularly invited as a speaker, expert and stakeholder in various consultations, studies, or working groups of the European Commission or stakeholder groups convened by the European Parliament
- Partner in various European projects supported by Creative Europe, Erasmus+, Social Dialogue
- Domestic Advisory Group under the Protocol on Cultural Cooperation between the EU and Korea

PEARLE* MEMBERS

NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Austria Bühnenverein Österreichischer Bundesländer & Städte - Association of regional and city theaters in Austria | Wiener Bühnenverein - Association of Theatres in Vienna

Belgium Belgische Schouwspelvereniging - BSV/ Association Belge du Spectacle, ABS - Association of performing arts in Belgium | Overleg Kunstenorganisaties, oKo - Platform for arts organisations | Fédération des Employeurs des Arts de la Scène, FEAS - Federation of employers in the performing arts

Bulgaria Balgarska asotsiatsia na rabotodatelite v oblasti na kulturata, BAROK - Bulgarian Association of employers in Culture

Czech Republic Asociace profesionálních divadel České republiky, APD ČR - Association of the Professional theatres in the Czech Republic | Asociace symfonických orchestrů a pěveckých sborů České republiky, ASOPS - Association of the Czech Symphony Orchestras and Choirs

Denmark Dansk Teater - Danish Association of Theatres | Danske Ensembles, Orkestre og Operainstitutioner, DEOO - Association of Danish ensembles, orchestras and opera institutions

Estonia Eesti Etendusasutuste Liit, EETEAL - Estonian Association of Performing Arts Institutions

Finland Suomen Teatterit ry / Finlands Teatrar rf, STEFI - Association of Finnish Theatres | Suomen Sinfoniaorkesterit, SUOSIO - Association of Finnish Symphony Orchestras | Teatterikeskus - Theatre center

France Association française des Orchestres, AFO - Association of French Orchestras | Fédération des employeurs du spectacle vivant public et privé, FEPS - Federation of employers in the public and private live performance in France | Les Forces Musicales - Association of French opera houses, orchestras and lyric theatres

Germany Deutscher Bühnenverein, Bundesverband der Theater und Orchester, DBV - German Theatre and Orchestra Association | Verband für Medien- und Veranstaltungstechnik, VPLT - German Entertainment Technology Association

Hungary Magyar Szimfonikus Zenekarok Szövetsége - Association of Hungarian Orchestras | Magyar Színházi Társaság - Hungarian Theatre Society

Iceland Samtök atvinnuveitenda í sviðslit og tónlist, SAVIST - Employers association for the performing arts in Iceland

Italy Associazione Generale Italiana dello Spettacolo, AGIS - Association of performing arts organisations

Netherlands Vereniging van Schouwburg- en Concertgebouwdirecties, VSCD - Association of Dutch Venues and Concert halls Directors | Nederlandse Associatie Podiumkunsten, NAPK - Dutch Association of Performing Arts & Music Organisations | Vereniging Nederlandse pop podia en festivals, VNPF - Association of Dutch Music Venues and Festivals | Vereniging van Nederlandse Orkesten, VvNO - Association of Dutch Orchestras

Norway Norsk Teater- og Orkesterforening, NTO - Association of Norwegian Theatres and Orchestras

Poland Zrzeszenie Filharmonii Polskich, ZFP - Society of Polish Philharmonics | Unia Teatrów Niezależnych, UTN - Union of Independent Theatres

Portugal Associação para as artes performativas em Portugal, PERFORMART - Portuguese association of performing arts

Slovenia Kolegij direktorjev slovenskih gledališč, STM - Association of Slovene theatre managers

Slovakia Asociácia Slovenských Divadiel a Orchestrov, ASDO - Association of Slovak Theatres and Orchestras

Spain Federación Estatal de Asociaciones de Empresas Productoras de Teatro y Danza, FAETEDA - State Federation of Associations of Theatre and Dance production enterprises | Asociación Española de Orquestas Sinfónicas, AEOS - Association of Spanish Symphony Orchestras | Asociación de Festivales de Música, FMA - Association of music festivals

Sweden Svensk Scenkonst - Swedish Performing Arts

Switzerland Schweizerischer Bühnenverband - SBV/Union des Théâtres Suisses - UTS/Unione dei Teatri Svizzeri - Association of theatres in Switzerland | Fédération Romande des Arts de la Scène, FRAS - Association of "Roman" theatres in Switzerland | Orchester.ch - Association of orchestras in Switzerland

United Kingdom The Society of London Theatre, SOLT | UK Theatre Association | Association of British Orchestras, ABO

NON-EUROPEAN ASSOCIATIONS

Australia Live Performance Australia, LPA

EUROPEAN NETWORKS

AEAA, European Association of artist managers | ECA, European Circus Association | EFA, European Festivals Association | ETC-CTE - European Theatre Convention | FEST, European Federation of Storytelling | FEVIS Europe | Opera Europa | PLASA (Europe) | REMA - EEMN, European Early Music Network | Trans Europe Halles

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Ancienne Belgique (AB) - Concert venue Brussels, BE | Bozar - fine arts center Brussels, BE | COE-Chamber Orchestra of Europe - London, UK | Cyprus Symphony Orchestra Foundation - Nicosia, CY | deSingel arts center - Antwerp, BE | Feld Entertainment - NL | LNSO Latvian National Symphony Orchestra - Riga, LV | Malta Philharmonic Orchestra - Floriana, MT | Megaron Athens Concert hall - Athens, GR | Sport Paleis - Concert & event venue Antwerp, BE

For the most recent list, please visit www.pearle.eu/members




ABOUT PEARLE*-LIVE PERFORMANCE EUROPE

Pearle*-Live Performance Europe is the European umbrella association for live music, performing arts and live event industry.

It represents, through its national federations and associate members - leading organisations in their respective countries and European networks - more than 13,600 enterprises, both non-profit and profit-making. Around 45% are performing arts organisations, more than 30% are music organisations, and about 15% are festivals. The remaining 10% includes a wide range of other organisations, such as visual arts, cinema, providers, technical companies, and more, reflecting the broad spectrum of the performing arts sector.

Pearle*-Live Performance Europe was founded in 1991 and has built a trustworthy relationship with European institutions in a wide range of European policy areas and regulatory affairs.

Pearle*-Live Performance Europe aims to establish a stable environment by supporting sustainability and promotion of the live performance sector across Europe through three main strands:

-  As a sector federation – representing the specific interests of the sector at European level and internationally
-  As an international network – regrouping the leading federations in the sector in their respective countries and European networks and providing a forum for exchange
-  As an employers' association – putting social affairs issues and the human capital at the heart of its operations (see [Pearle* declaration on good employment by live performance organisations of November 2023](#))

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