

# Unleashing the Potential of the European Live Performance Sector

Key findings from a Pearle\* mobility survey

## One Europe, One Market

## Europe for Culture, Culture for Europe



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# Introduction

Across Europe, citizens of all ages, backgrounds and countries may enjoy live concerts, performances, or shows, with access to culture often taken for granted. But very little is known about the countless rules that apply when putting on these same concerts, performances and shows, not least in a cross-border context. Moreover, the live performance sector – encompassing live music, performing arts and event enterprises – rarely follows standardised practices, as operations are nearly always customised to fit specific needs. Following the initiatives of the European Commission on a Competitiveness Compass in January 2025, the Strategy on a Single Market in May 2025, and the presentation of a Cultural Compass in November 2025, Pearle\* is pleased to present the findings of a mobility survey conducted among its members between September and December 2025.

The survey gathered 179 responses from 19 countries across Europe, offering insight on the areas and types of challenges the sector faces on a daily basis when working across borders. Alongside the difficulty of understanding the rules, the associated administrative burdens and complicated, often lengthy create deeper underlying problems, such as cash-flow pressures and direct loss of income, as well as wasted human resources time, unnecessary expenditure, and additional costs for hiring experts, lawyers, consultants, or payroll service providers.

Drawing directly from daily practice, examples and quotes illustrate just how significant the challenges are when carrying out cross-border activities. To reduce administrative burdens, three main recommendations emerged: ensuring consistency of rules and their implementation across Member States, providing single information portals, and offering a one-stop shop for administrative compliance.

**“One Europe, One Market”** is the commitment made by EU leaders in February to improve the functioning of the internal market, as presented by the Commission at the March 2026 European Council. Besides, the Cultural Compass, issued in November 2025, goes by the motto **“Europe for Culture, Culture for Europe”**.

Complementing these overarching objectives and industry-specific focus, this provides fresh insights on how to to unleash the potential of the live performance sector and build a true single market for its activities.

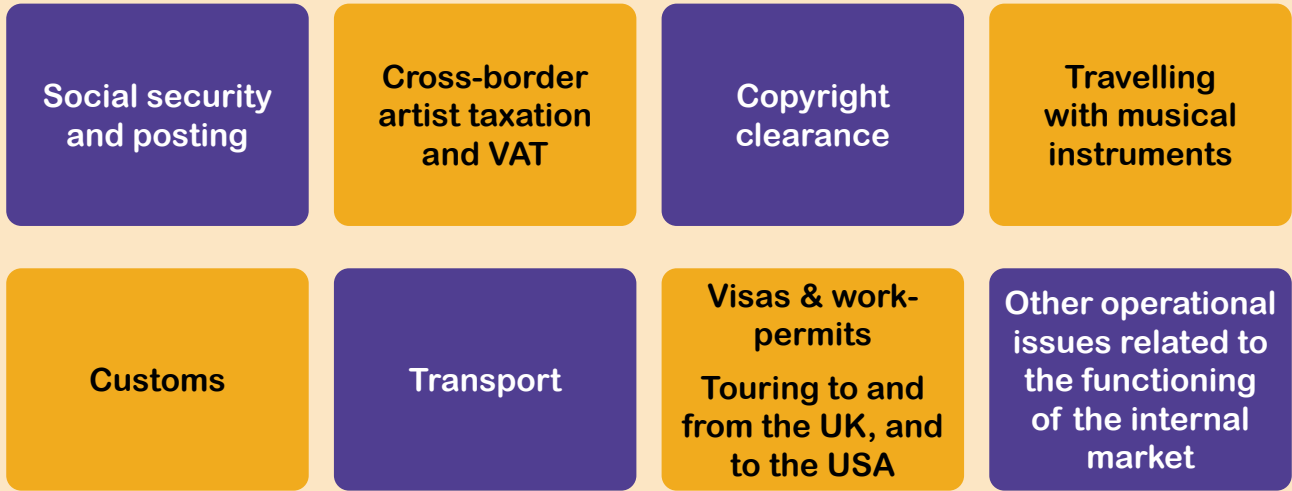
Will 2026 mark another milestone in the sector’s 20-year quest to advance mobility, support touring, and foster cultural exchange? What does the current picture reveal? And what could a truly borderless internal market look like when honouring the free movement of goods, services, people, and capital?

Following the 2006 European Year on Workers’ Mobility, a process began across Europe to establish dedicated infopoints for the cultural sector, providing guidance on mobility questions when travelling abroad. From 2016 onwards, practical brochures have been developed to explain European rules to cultural practitioners, alongside guidance and training. Meanwhile, over the same period, the EU has worked to digitalise processes and integrate administrative and government system, a process that continues today.

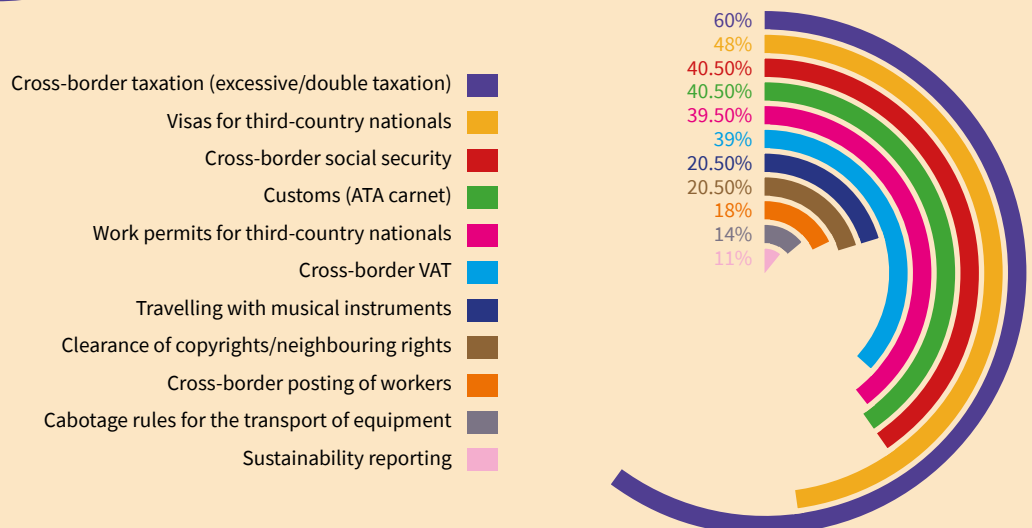
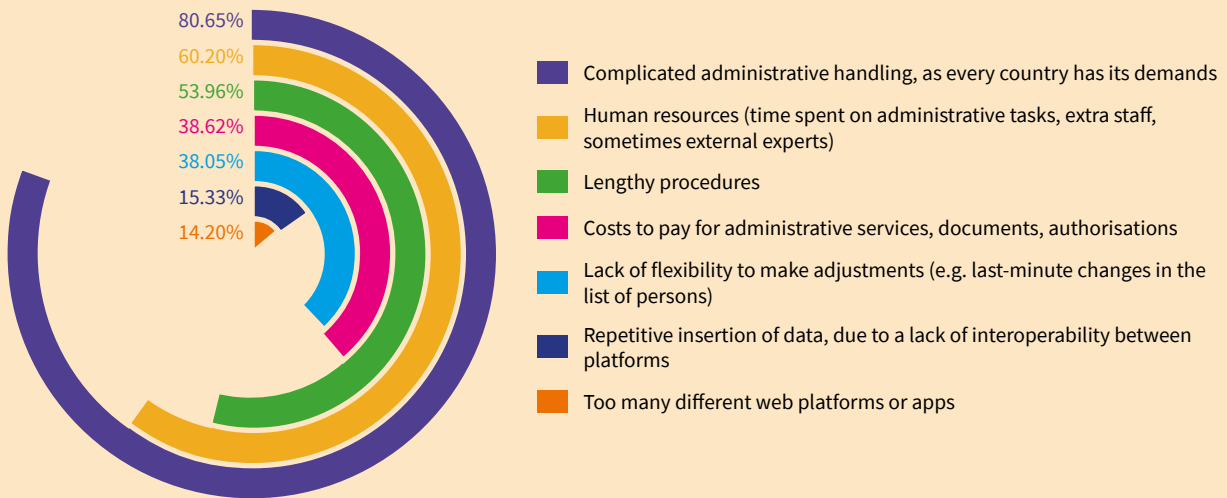
Now is the time to deliver by providing concrete tools and simplifying administrative procedures, alongside sector-specific administrative measures. Such actions will have a direct impact on the potential of the live performance impact, enhancing its competitiveness, strengthening its role in society and boosting its contribution to prosperity and Europe’s economic and social model.

# Key findings of the survey

The main topics identified by respondents to the survey are situated in the following policy areas.



The issues mentioned as a hindrance to unleash the potential of the live performance are the following:



# Looking ahead: “One Europe, One Market” , “Europe for Culture, Culture for Europe”

In order to establish a true EU internal market which supports cultural mobility we call for a strategy based on the following key objectives.



**Concrete actions to reduce administrative burdens**

**Abolishment of high compliance costs resulting from complex rules**



**Harmonised approach to tax, employment and other mobility requirements**

**This will help unleash the potential of the European live performance sector**

## Context: the live performance sector in figures

According to Eurostat in 2023, there were about 2.1 million cultural enterprises in the EU, representing 6.4% of all businesses within the [business economy](#). Over a quarter of these enterprises were involved in “Creative, arts and entertainment activities” (28.6%), making them the largest share of number of enterprises, whilst only positioning itself in fifth place as regards the creation of added value, i.e. 11,9% of a total of 201,64 billion Euros for the cultural sector in 2023.

Furthermore, the [employment](#) in the creative, arts and entertainment in 2024 is the highest of all cultural sectors, providing work to 1,122 million people on a total of 7,9 million in culture employment. It is also worth noting that 78% of EU workers are employed by micro-enterprises (i.e. less than 10 people).

These figures demonstrate the potential of the sector to create higher added value. A key solution is to reduce administrative burdens, related unnecessary costs and time. This would mean a significant forward-looking development for the benefit of the sector and its ecosystem as a whole, including the enterprises and the individual artists and cultural professionals working in the sector as such.

As described in the Letta report: “the single market remains a cornerstone of European integration and values, serving as a powerful catalyst for growth, prosperity and solidarity”.

Finally, from a global perspective, looking at Eurostat figures on [trade in services](#), although not providing precise information on the sector, the following data are worth noting: in 2024, “personal, cultural and recreational” services represented 24.5 billion euros of export from the EU to third countries, versus 15.7 billion euros of import.

# Social Security and Posting of Workers

For decades, the coordination of social security systems across Member States has been an essential part of Europe's internal market. Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 and Implementing Regulation (EU) No 1231/ are therefore core pieces of legislation for any worker or company undertaking cross-border activities. In addition, the Posting of Workers Directive (96/71/EC, revised by Directive 2018/957) and the Enforcement Directive (2014/67/EU) are also relevant.

## 1. Structural Inconsistencies in A1 Coordination

Live performance organisations operating across the EU face long delays (sometimes up to 18 months), unclear procedures, and inconsistent guidance when applying for A1 certificates. In some cases, certificates are issued incorrectly or not at all, creating uncertainty about where social-security contributions must be paid, and increasing the risk of double contributions.

Much of this burden stems from the lack of a harmonised approach across Member States. Requirements vary significantly from one country to another. For example, some national authorities accept a single A1 certificate covering an entire orchestra, while others require an individual certificate for each musician. Application systems also differ, and in some countries, A1 certificates are reportedly not required at all. This lack of consistency creates additional confusion, particularly for third-country nationals.

As one Dutch organisation notes: *“When giving a concert in another country, for example, Spain, the concert venues there want A1 forms for every single musician, whereas in the Netherlands, there is one form with which you can prove that you, as an organisation, are the employer of all those musicians. They should accept such a form EU-wide.”* (NL)

Delays to obtain A1 forms are especially problematic, as they do not match the way in which the sector operates. This is the case, for example, for short-notice engagements or contracts concluded in the last instance.

*“A singer was offered a jump-in in Italy. The contract finished weeks before the A1 was received. This could have cost the artist thousands of euros in social security payments.”* (UK)

*“We finalise the contracts for performances abroad sometimes even less than one month ahead. Waiting times for A1 forms are approximately 2 months.”* (CZ)

## 2. Practical Compliance Challenges

Even when the applicable legislation is clear, and an A1 certificate has been issued, compliance remains complex. When working with freelancers who are not resident in the country of the employer, organisations often struggle to obtain accurate information on the contribution rates due in the other country, the payment procedures, and the competent authorities. Language barriers and opaque national systems force organisations to invest disproportionately in administrative capacity.

*“If we hire a foreign artist to work with us, they sometimes remain within their home country's social security system. It is quite impossible to find out what the correct percentages of different contributions are and where to send the money”* (SE)

The additional costs can be substantial — reportedly reaching 43%:

*“As we hired French musicians, remaining subject to French social security, we ended up with 43% indirect costs and extra paperwork.”* (FI)

In some cases, errors take years to resolve: *“It took 2 years to make this right.”* (FI)

Lack of expertise within social-security administrations further compounds the issue, leading to inconsistent interpretations and shifting responsibilities between institutions.

### 3. Disproportionate requirements

The current system does not fully reflect the realities of the live performance sector, where tours are often short-term or organised at short notice. Applying for individual A1 certificates for one-day performances or brief tours creates a disproportionate administrative burden and can even result in cancelled shows.

Applications are frequently valid only for a single trip and short timeframes, meaning the process must be repeated for each engagement.

*“The forms are often only valid for a single trip, meaning we have to repeat this entire process every time we tour, which significantly increases our administrative workload.” (CZ)*

Applications may also be incomplete or incorrect.

*“Applications get lost, and when they eventually arrive, can have countries missing or shorter duration than requested.” (UK)*

### 4. Barriers for Third-Country Nationals

Beyond EU coordination, major obstacles arise when engaging third-country artists. In the absence of bilateral social security agreements, contributions paid in the host country may not entitle the artist to benefits, while still generating substantial additional costs.

A French organisation explains: *“When there is no bilateral agreement (...) the contributions collected in France do not benefit the artists concerned while generating a significant additional cost.” (FR)*

Even where agreements exist, documentation remains complex.

*“It is sometimes very complicated (...) to provide us with the A1 form(s).” (FR)*

Administrative barriers can even require hiring specialised staff.

*“We had to hire a Polish-speaking expert to pay contributions to the Polish Social Security System (ZUS).” (DE)*

### 5. Posting of Workers

Challenges intensify when posting freelance staff. In some cases, organisations must temporarily place freelancers on their payroll, triggering posting-of-workers obligations and A1 requirements that are difficult to fulfil, especially when artists are based abroad.

Documentation may be impossible to obtain in time, creating legal and financial risks.

*“We had an artist last season who was struggling to secure the A1 form needed due to unclear instructions on how to apply for the form needed in the country of residence. It was a very lengthy procedure before it was clear what social security regime applied, and the fee could be paid.” (DE)*

Promoters may threaten cancellation if documentation is missing.

*“Some promoters (...) threaten us to cancel the contract if we cannot provide A1 for each musician. We are in a complete dead end.” (FR)*

Regarding the required notification of posting of workers, each country has its own administrative formalities: some require this to be done via an online portal, others by email, while in others the procedures are not clearly defined.

A Czech ensemble explains: *“In the case of a one-day posting abroad (...) it is very burdensome (...) If it were a long-term assignment, then yes, we can understand.” (CZ)*

## Summary of Administrative Burdens

Across all categories, the system to comply with rules on posting and working in more than two Member States results in:

- Cumbersome and repetitive procedures that require significant HR capacity
- Long processing times that are incompatible with artistic production cycles
- High direct and indirect costs (in some cases, up to 43%)
- A lack of a harmonised approach and inconsistent handling by national authorities
- Limited specialised guidance from competent institutions
- Insufficient flexibility for (very) short-term or touring activities

As one Czech organisation wrote: *“Obtaining A1 forms is a major administrative headache.” (CZ)*

## What practitioners wish

- Harmonised procedures, which would provide greater clarity, more legal certainty, and a single point of communication
- Simplification, as the legislation has become too complex to understand and apply correctly
- A single portal through which users can obtain information, ask questions, and access documents and forms
- A European one-stop shop that would avoid the need to submit the same information repeatedly

## What the EU can do in the area of social security and posting to unleash the potential of the live performance sector

- The Administrative Commission for the Coordination of Social Security Systems could adopt an agreement allowing live performance employers to pay the social security contributions of an Article 13 BR artistic worker in the country where the employer is established.
- ESSPASS should become the main document facilitating worker mobility, possibly linked to the European Health Insurance Card and eID.
- Very short-term postings should be excluded from the social security rules, as there is a clear tension between the administrative burden placed on the employer, the need for social security institutions and inspectorates to prevent abuse or evasion of contributions, and the need to ensure legal certainty for the mobile worker to avoid gaps in transnational social protection.
- Cultural organisations should be exempted, as is already the case in Belgium, from notification requirements for very short-term postings.

Withholding tax on the income of artists or indirect taxation of services in a cross-border context regularly causes compliance issues. In particular, the special tax rules for performing artists, resulting from the application of Article 17 of the OECD model tax treaty, often result in excessive or double taxation.

## 1. Understanding and Applying Correct Tax Rules

Tax rules vary significantly between countries and remain only partially harmonised at the EU level. In federal systems, regional authorities may apply additional rules or variations. As a result, calculating and applying the correct tax treatment for cross-border performances requires extensive research, documentation, and administrative work.

Withholding tax rates differ, expense deductions are applied inconsistently, and foreign tax credits are often uncertain. Each engagement often requires a separate legal analysis, making standardised contracts difficult to use in practice, particularly when working with third-country nationals.

A French organisation explains: *“Studying bilateral tax treaties is a rather laborious task. Understanding the legal texts is not always straightforward, and this can lead to errors in interpretation.”* (FR)

Administrative processing can be highly technical and time-consuming.

*“The processing of German tax on musicians’ fees earned on a tour will require orchestra staff to calculate and prepare on a spreadsheet details of all the fees earned and the tax to be deducted, which is then checked and processed via an accountant, with tax certificates then emailed individually to the players, who then in turn need to complete and submit tax documentation.”* (UK)

Specialist advice is often unavoidable: *“Finding laws and articles and checking with tax-advisors takes a lot of time, while nobody really gives an answer.”* (NL)

For small organisations and independent artists, these requirements are disproportionate and reduce available artistic budgets.

One German organisation notes: *“Withholding taxes make it almost impossible for small, non-funded (...) companies to accept contracts in Germany. (...) An exemption on withholding taxes in Germany takes now up to a year to obtain (...)”* (DE)

Uncertainty is further compounded by limited knowledge within tax authorities themselves.

*“No tax official in Finland seems to know in detail about the correct way of taxation when sending someone abroad. (...) Nobody seems to know how and where they should pay their taxes.”* (FI)

## 2. Tax Exemptions, Recovery and Double Taxation

Although exemptions and treaty protections exist in principle, in practice, they are often complex, slow, and ineffective. Applications must be submitted well in advance and require extensive documentation, including tax residency certificates that are not always available in time.

*“The administrative process is very complicated and differs in every country. The application for the tax credit must be submitted well in advance. Reclaiming the taxes can take up to two years, since they are withheld at the source. This creates administrative and cash flow problems for small organisations”.* (BE)

Exemption certificates can take over a year to obtain: *“Obtaining a tax exemption certificate from the German tax authorities can take up to 15 months.”* (NL)

In many cases, organisations abandon recovery procedures altogether due to the burden involved.

*“For certain countries (e.g. Spain), we have decided to forfeit the withholding tax (...) rather than go through the administrative burden of trying to reclaim it.”* (UK)

As a result, double taxation frequently persists despite bilateral tax treaties. When companies invoice venues collectively, individual artists often cannot obtain proof of the tax withheld on their personal income and therefore cannot claim a foreign tax credit.

*“Double taxation, which tax treaties are supposed to prevent, still frequently occurs. In practice, withholding tax ultimately amounts to an additional tax on the service.” (FR)*

This effectively turns withholding tax into a non-recoverable additional cost, creating a structural barrier to cultural cooperation.

### 3. Withholding Tax and Documentation Requirements

Withholding tax obligations vary widely and often require detailed documentation, including individual tax residency certificates for each artist.

In Spain, for example: *“Authorities require a tax residency certificate for each artist. (...) This requirement is very difficult to meet.” (FR)*

*Organisations must continuously request and renew tax domicile documents. “The tax residency document, we need for each event abroad. (...) We are never sure what documents we need. (...) It is different everywhere.” (CZ)*

The need to verify country-specific expense deductions and treaty provisions further delays engagements.

*“Specific country tax laws may allow a deemed expense deduction, but we need to research this extensively before the posting of workers can happen.” (CZ)*

These requirements significantly increase production costs and delay contractual finalisation.

### 4. Cashflow and Operational Impact

Long processing times and slow refunds create serious cashflow pressures. Withholding taxes may remain outstanding for years, and in some cases, cannot be recovered at all.

As noted by a UK organisation: *“German withholding tax is incredibly slow to process and recover, causing cashflow issues.” (UK)*

For publicly-funded organisations that cannot reclaim foreign taxes, cross-border activity becomes structurally more expensive.

Ultimately, income tax often becomes the most contentious issue in international negotiations.

*“Everything from travel to accommodation is usually straightforward, but income tax often creates last-minute conflicts.” (summary of sector feedback)*

### 5. VAT Rules and Invoicing Challenges

VAT systems remain only partially harmonised and are frequently misunderstood, particularly regarding reverse-charge mechanisms and cross-border invoicing. Organisations report inconsistent interpretations, incorrect VAT requirements, and prolonged negotiations with promoters and authorities.

A Finnish organisation illustrates the confusion: *“We were trying to find out if the VAT in Spain should be added (...) and got so many different answers that we lost track.” (FI)*

In some cases, organisers impose VAT without legal clarity: *“A Belgian organiser ‘forced’ us (...) not to add VAT on the fee. (...) It took us a lot of work and paid advice to find out if this was legal.” (NL)*

Non-commercial cultural organisations face disproportionate burdens when VAT is applied to imported services, even when they make no taxable supplies themselves.

## Summary of Administrative Burdens

Across taxation systems, performing arts organisations face:

- Cumbersome and resource-intensive procedures
- Lack of transparency and inconsistent interpretations
- Limited harmonisation of administrative requirements across Member States
- Lengthy exemption and refund processes
- Disproportionate costs, particularly for small organisations
- Insufficient sector-specific guidance
- Limited expertise within tax authorities

## What practitioners wish

- **Withholding tax:** apply the normal tax rules applicable to companies and workers. In other words, abolish Article 17 in the OECD Model Tax Convention.
- **VAT:** allow cultural operators to choose whether to make use of a tax exemption or to apply a reduced VAT rate to cultural activities.

## What the EU can do in the area of taxation to unleash the potential of the live performance sector

1. Cross-border taxation of artists subject to withholding tax: a two-step approach.
  - a. Facilitate an EU-wide or multilateral agreement between Member States to apply the same rules to performing arts organisations where their workers are employees, in line with Article 15 of the OECD Model Tax Convention, and to exempt artists earning less than EUR 20 000.
  - b. Encourage Member States to abolish the taxation of non-resident artists, following the example of the Netherlands, Denmark and Ireland.
2. Create a common form to prove a person's fiscal residence and a common form for tax credit claims, combined with a central information point for questions relating to artists' taxation, the submission of forms, and the obtaining of tax certificates.
3. VAT
  - a. Allow performing arts organisations, especially public bodies and non-profit organisations, to make use of the right to be tax-exempt or to apply a reduced VAT rate.
  - b. Provide tailored guidance and clarify the application of the reverse-charge mechanism for cultural organisations, as this remains a source of ongoing misunderstanding.

# Travelling with Musical Instruments

For musicians to carry out their profession, it is essential for them to be able to travel with their musical instruments. Such instruments can be of high heritage and monetary value and therefore need to be transported under the best protective conditions.

## 1. Air Travel Restrictions and Inconsistent Airline Policies

Musicians face significant uncertainty when travelling by air with instruments. Cabin luggage rules vary widely between airlines, and enforcement often depends on the discretion of check-in or gate staff rather than clear, standardised criteria.

Advance confirmations from airlines frequently offer no guarantee at the airport. As one Finnish organisation explains: *“Air travel with instruments has become more and more unpredictable (...) The shape and size of instruments allowed as hand luggage seems to be dependent on whatever the opinion of the individual staff at the gate or check-in happens to be.” (FI)*

Even when airlines formally allow instruments in the cabin, musicians often encounter resistance at boarding. *“Handheld instruments (...) often have a battle trying to get on planes (...) Airlines want to put them in the hold as they ‘don’t fit in the lockers’ which of course is not the case.” (UK)*

This inconsistency creates stress, delays, and operational risks, particularly for ensembles travelling as a group.

There is a clear call for harmonised size rules based on the combined dimensions (length + width + height) of instruments, applicable across all airlines. As one Hungarian organisation notes:

*“There is no definite rule (...) A common rule would be welcomed (...) That is the biggest issue now.” (HU)*

## 2. Extra Seats, Excess Baggage and Rising Costs

For larger instruments, such as double basses or cellos, musicians are often required to purchase an additional seat. The booking process is frequently cumbersome, involving lengthy phone calls and requests for precise technical measurements, even when the instrument clearly meets airline standards.

A German organisation describes the experience: *“There are very few small companies which allow you to book extra seats (...) without phone calls (...), giving exact measurements. (...) And after all this, the price is different to the one given by the usual booking pages.” (DE)*

Travel costs increase substantially when an extra seat must be purchased, even in cases where the instrument is ultimately stored in the overhead compartment.

When instruments travel as excess baggage, weight limits create additional constraints. Airlines may refuse transport or leave instruments behind when capacity is restricted.

*“On occasion, we have had instruments left behind on flights. (...) Increasingly, airlines are putting a limit on the weight of excess baggage, which is below the weight of a double bass.” (UK)*

As a result, some ensembles avoid travelling with certain instruments altogether and instead hire locally, despite artistic compromises.

## 3. Risks of Damage and Emergencies

Airlines frequently insist on placing instruments in the hold, increasing the risk of damage. For fragile or high-value instruments, this risk is significant and discourages travel.

As noted by a German organisation: *“Usually we leave double basses at home (...) the fear of bad handling of big checked items at the airports is too strong.” (DE)*

Unpredictability is particularly problematic when last-minute changes arise.

*“Each company has a different policy (...) if there is a last-minute emergency or change, then it just becomes a matter of how much emergency budget you can afford.” (ES)*

These risks undermine financial planning and create avoidable stress for musicians and producers.

## 4. Limited Greener Travel Options

Restrictions do not only apply to air travel. Certain large instruments, particularly double basses, cannot be transported on some international train services, including Eurostar. This limits the feasibility of lower-emission touring alternatives.

As one French organisation reports: *“It is not possible to take a double bass on trains, including Eurostar, limiting greener touring options.” (FR)*

This directly conflicts with broader sustainability goals within the cultural sector.

## 5. Insurance Costs

Insurance for international travel with instruments is difficult to calculate and often extremely expensive. Premiums increase further when instruments must be checked into the hold, where the risk of damage is higher. For smaller organisations, these costs can become prohibitive.

## 6. CITES Procedures

Instruments containing protected materials, such as ivory, tortoiseshell, or specific woods, require documentation under CITES rules. While these rules are designed to protect endangered species, the procedures are often expensive, complex, and of limited validity.

Musicians may need expert certification to identify the materials used in each instrument and bow. For performers travelling with multiple instruments, this becomes both costly and time-consuming.

In addition, identifying the competent authority responsible for issuing the correct certificate can itself be challenging, further delaying travel preparations.

Some countries apply particularly strict biosecurity measures affecting instruments made from natural materials. For example, Australia enforces controls relating to plant residues and untreated wood. These requirements add further administrative burdens and uncertainty for touring musicians.

### Summary of Administrative Burdens

Across air travel and regulatory frameworks, musicians and music ensembles face:

- Inconsistent airline rules and discretionary enforcement
- Lack of harmonised size standards
- Limited flexibility for last-minute changes
- High additional costs (including extra seats, excess baggage, insurance)
- Risk of damage to valuable instruments
- Restrictions that limit greener transport options
- Expensive and short-validity CITES permits
- Lack of clear guidance and predictability

As one Finnish organisation summarises: *“Any pre-emptive work (...) seems to have very little effect on what actually happens at the airport on the day of travel.” (FI)*

## What practitioners wish

- Certainty that instruments can be taken on board with all airlines and on every type of aircraft
- Possibility to also take large instruments on trains and coaches
- Easy access to Musical Instrument Certificates, whilst being exempt from the requirement to have them stamped at each border crossing

## What the EU can do in the area of travelling with musical instruments to unleash the potential of the live performance sector

- Finalise the negotiations on the Air Carrier Liability Regulation, including Article 6e on the carriage of musical instruments on aircraft. Subsequently, closely monitor the implementation and application of this provision.
- Establish EU-wide recognition that musical instruments may have both high monetary value and cultural heritage value, while at the same time constituting essential professional equipment for musicians.
- Encourage Member States to issue CITES Musical Instrument Certificates free of charge when musicians travel in and out of the EU and to simplify the related administrative procedures.

# Copyright and Rights Management

In the live performance sector and in a cross-border context, copyrights and neighbouring rights need to be cleared before a performance can be staged in each country, because of the principle of territoriality in collective rights management.

## 1. Structural Fragmentation

Copyright management in cross-border contexts is unclear due to differing national legal frameworks, declaration requirements, and widely varying copyright and neighbouring rights rates.

Rights clearance processes are often non-transparent, especially when negotiating directly with large international rights-holding companies. Limited cooperation with foreign collective management organisations means that copyright obligations are sometimes identified late in planning, increasing administrative pressure and budget uncertainty.

## 2. Operational Barriers

Unclear division of responsibilities between publishers, collecting societies, producers, and organisers lead to prolonged negotiations over who is responsible for paying which fees. Producers are often unable to pay copyright fees upfront and re-invoice them to organisers, causing delays and deadlocks.

Misalignment between direct rights management and automatic royalty payments to foreign collecting societies can lead either to double payment or to a loss of income for rightsholders.

As a Dutch organisation describes: *“We manage our own copyrights, while organisers automatically pay to the foreign copyright organisation. Either this results in double pay or we lose our remuneration.”* (NL)

### Summary of Administrative Burdens

Across rules related to copyright clearance, in case of cross-border activities, live performance organisations face:

- Burdensome clearance procedures, opaque negotiations and late identification of obligations
- Lack of harmonisation with differing national systems, rates and procedures
- Lack of guidance including unclear allocation of roles and payment responsibilities

### What practitioners wish

- A one-stop shop allowing rights to be cleared in a single procedure

### What the EU can do in the area of copyright clearance to unleash the potential of the live performance sector

- Support the development of an easily accessible EU-wide database on repertoire and rightsholders for each collecting society
- Develop simple and common principles and clarify criteria upon which tariffs are calculated
- Create arbitration mechanisms, allowing organisations to find reasonable solutions flexibly
- Simplify administrative obligations by setting a one-stop shop to clear all rights used during a performance in one central office in each EU country

The Customs Union allows goods to move within the internal market without obstacles, but taking equipment such as stage sets, props, costumes, and musical instruments temporarily in and out of the EU causes practical problems. Even where the Union Customs Code does not require the use of an ATA Carnet, Member States and third countries can still require it.

## 1. Practical compliance challenges with ATA Carnets

Rules on when an ATA Carnet is required lack harmonisation and vary by country. Requirements may depend on how authorities assess the quantity or value of the equipment, creating uncertainty for touring organisations.

The Carnet procedure itself is highly detailed and time-consuming. Full packing lists, values, weights and serial numbers must be provided, often before trucks are fully loaded. This requires specialised staff expertise and extensive preparation time.

As described by a Czech dance company: *“When travelling to a third country, we spent almost 1 month managing ATA carnet documents, paid almost 1200 €, and still weren’t sure if we had all the documents completed and didn’t know where to get them checked at the borders.” (CZ)*

Carnets offer no flexibility for last-minute changes. All transported items must exactly match the list submitted. Replacing instruments due to unpredictable illness or unavailability is extremely difficult, especially when large instruments are involved.

This issue is illustrated by a UK organisation: *“Once the carnet has been submitted, it’s then not possible to swap listed instruments. In case of injury or illness, this is very problematic for non-handheld instruments.” (UK)*

The administrative workload and costs are often disproportionate to the performance budget, sometimes reaching several thousand euros per tour. For occasional performances, flying instruments as baggage can be more practical than transporting them by van, despite environmental implications.

## 2. Customs controls and inconsistent enforcement

Border checks are time-consuming and unpredictable. Even short cross-border journeys require the manual completion of ATA Carnet customs forms and the payment of substantial fees.

Since Brexit, EU-UK customs procedures (in both directions) have significantly increased in complexity and required greater staffing capacity.

As a Belgian music ensemble describes: *“Customs checks between the UK and EU cannot be estimated in terms of time. Travelling (with an instrument van) on the concert day is no longer possible.”*

A Finnish Dance centre adds: *“Touring in the UK is much more difficult since Brexit (...) We need more staff to prepare.” (FI)*

The location of authorised customs offices for carnet stamping is often unclear, and routing must sometimes be adapted to pass through an open office, which is frequently incompatible with night travel. These challenges are particularly true at small border crossings, where it can be difficult to find both an authorised office and staff available to stamp carnets.

This concern is a daily reality, such as reported by a German touring orchestra: *“The necessary ATA carnet for instruments has become very detailed, it is a lot of work to prepare, and it causes a lot of stress at the border control, as everything in the truck must exactly be what is stated on the carnet”. (DE)*

Enforcement is inconsistent. Although detailed serial number requirements exist, checks rarely occur, but a single inspection could cause major disruption if minor discrepancies are found.

### 3. Special shipments complications

Exporting and importing equipment often requires multiple authorisations across different countries, combined with unclear official guidance and extensive correspondence.

Air freight for stage sets is expensive and complex, sea freight immobilises equipment for long periods, while rail freight remains underdeveloped. Merchandise and props trigger customs duties, VAT and long border waiting times, sometimes to an extent that exceeds available budgets.

This is illustrated by a UK promoter: *“Paying for customs duties on taking merchandise, paying someone with expertise to arrange customs, paying a driver and then everyone else in the vehicle to wait in queues at the border, is beyond the budget of our business.” (UK)*

#### Summary of Administrative Burdens

Across rules related to customs requirements of Member States on the temporary import and export of goods, touring organisations face:

- Cumbersome procedures requiring human resources, including long preparation times and specialised knowledge
- Lack of specialised guidance from authorities, leading to uncertainty about compliance
- Lack of harmonisation, due to varying national rules
- Lack of flexibility, including the impossibility of amending Carnets
- Arbitrary enforcement of rules with inconsistent border practices
- Risks (for instruments), including potential confiscation
- Delays, due to unpredictable processing times
- High costs, including for obtaining Carnet, VAT and other customs expenses

#### What practitioners wish

- Member States to follow the EU Customs Code and refrain from requiring touring companies to obtain expensive ATA Carnets, which creates additional complications due to the need to have documents stamped at the border.

#### What the EU can do in the area of customs to unleash the potential of the live performance sector

- Encourage Member States not to require the use of ATA Carnets, nor the stamping of such documents at each border crossing, provided that the cultural organisation can demonstrate at all times a full and exhaustive list of all items used for the performance.
- Where ATA Carnets are required by Member States, provide financial support both to obtain the Carnet and to cover costs linked to the declared value of the transported items.

# Transport & Cabotage

Touring performances and shows require the transport of the necessary equipment to stage a production. Stage sets, audio and lighting equipment, props and costumes are the essential backbone of operations in the live performance sector. The same load travels from one place to another, and whether this activity falls under European transport rules remains the subject of considerable debate within the sector. In addition, as the transport chapter of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement failed to include a provision on 'own account' transport, touring groups with their own van or truck face additional difficulties when crossing between the EU and the UK.

## Cabotage and own account

For EU-based operators, the transport of technical equipment for touring purposes is, in principle, covered by the own-account transport regime and should not be subject to numerical cabotage limits. In practice, however, limits are reportedly still applied, restricting the flexibility of multi-country touring.

In addition, the legal framework for UK-registered vehicles is highly restrictive for touring activities. They cannot rely on the own-account exemption and are limited in the number of tour stops they can make under cabotage rules. This forces organisations to hire EU-based haulage companies, which introduces additional risks, especially regarding the handling of musical instruments. A UK symphony orchestra explains: *"We are essentially unable to use our own orchestra truck (...) we use a European company each time, which cost us c. £20k per tour."* (UK)

Where more than two stops are required, cross-loading at the Channel or routing EU trucks to the UK becomes necessary, significantly increasing costs. A UK chamber orchestra testifies: *"If we are making more than 2 stops, we can't use the truck. (...) This adds very considerably to touring costs."* (UK)

To avoid these constraints, some ensembles rent instruments instead of transporting them, introducing risks to the performance quality.

### Summary of Administrative Burdens

Across rules related to transport, touring organisations face:

- Additional burdens arising from the need to hire external hauliers
- Substantially higher costs
- Uncertainty on the application of transport rules in the sector

### What practitioners wish

- Touring with their own equipment, using their own van or truck, to be recognised as own-account transport

### What the EU can do in the area of transports to unleash the potential of the live performance sector

- Develop an EU-wide approach to transport for cultural purposes, in particular regarding the recognition of own-account transport for touring activities under EU transport rules.
- Recognise own-account transport for cultural purposes in the implementation of the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA).

# Visas & work permits

As an international sector, it is common to invite third-country national artists to perform in festivals, concert halls and venues. Live performance organisations based in the EU also invite and work with third-country national artists and other cultural professionals to take part in a specific performance, show or production. Depending on their nationality, the duration of their stay, and the type of engagement, third-country nationals may need a Schengen visa as well as a work permit, which often leads to complicated application processes.

## Schengen Visa

### 1. Inconsistent Guidance on Visa Application

Performing arts organisations report unclear and inconsistent information from embassies, consulates and immigration authorities. Communication is often difficult, and advice from different authorities can be contradictory, creating legal uncertainty. Conflicting interpretations by national authorities can directly cause professional losses.

Applications may be rejected or delayed due to minor formal issues: *“Applying for visas is extremely time-consuming (...) Consulates are very inflexible regarding minor typos or adjustments.”* (NL)

In some cases, embassies request documentation issued by authoritarian governments that appears unrelated to Schengen security requirements but may serve to control artists’ movements. *“German embassies repeatedly request specific documents. (...) These documents serve only to control these artists’ travel and activities abroad.”* (DE). This restricts artistic freedom and diversity while increasing costs.

### 2. Operational Barriers

Visa procedures are lengthy, unpredictable and expensive. Processing times vary widely depending on the country and visa type, and required documentation can include translated and apostilled documents, often at high cost. Approvals are frequently granted only shortly before departure, creating artistic and financial risk. A German theatre explains: *“Visa issued last-minute, causing extremely high travel costs and hazardous artistic planning.”* (DE)

Where artists are denied visas or decisions are delayed, organisations must hire last-minute replacements, often restricted to performers who do not require visas. This is illustrated by a German theatre: *“If we need to hire a short-notice guest, we have to make sure we hire someone who either does not need to provide a Visa or that the Visa can be applied for in the time given.”* (DE)

Passports may also be retained by consulates for extended period, thereby complicating parallel travel commitments. This situation is described by a Dutch orchestra: *“Musicians have to be without their passports for extended periods, which complicates their frequent travel.”* (NL)

### 3. Uncertainty about the need for work permits

Various countries in the EU provide exemptions for work permits for short periods. This facilitates international performances hosted in the EU. Nevertheless, the absence of uniform EU rules means that procedures and conditions must be checked separately for each country.

Processing times for work permits vary greatly by country, by the type of permit/visa needed, and the list of required documents. Applicants sometimes have to submit documents translated by an approved translator and duly certified, adding complexity to the process.

The interdependence between obtaining a Schengen visa and a work permit often delays the preparation

of required documents in time before a production begins. Performing arts organisations hiring third-country nationals report that visas are frequently approved only at the last moment, sometimes even the day before a tour starts. This creates a dilemma: contracts are needed early to secure the visa, yet organisations are often asked to sign them before all contractual arrangements have been finalised. In addition, when a third-country national artist is hired for longer than 90 days and requires a Single Permit, the contract is determined by the conditions set on it, which do not always reflect the realities of the sector.

## Summary of Administrative Burdens

Across visa and work permit frameworks, performing arts organisations face:

- Cumbersome, resource-intensive procedures
- Inconsistent handling and conflicting advice from authorities
- Lack of harmonisation across countries
- Limited flexibility for short-notice changes
- Long and unpredictable processing times
- High direct and indirect costs
- Lack of clear, sector-specific guidance

As one German orchestra summarises: *“It is always connected to a lot of stress, as often you do not know only shortly beforehand if the application was successful for everybody involved.”* (DE)

## What practitioners wish

- Smoother visa procedures
- Better communication and exchange with consulates
- Support from the national Ministries of Culture when inviting foreign artists to a cultural organisations based in their country
- Better coordination between the relevant administrations where both a Schengen visa and a work permit are required
- A harmonised approach across the EU to work permit exemptions for short cultural assignments

## What the EU can do in the area of visa policy and temporary employment of third-country nationals

- Provide guidance to consulates on the terminology used by the cultural sector when applying for visas, based on the [lexicon](#) drafted in 2024 by On the Move, Pearle\*, Africalia, and Mobiculture
- Develop more structured cooperation between Ministries of Culture, sectoral organisations hosting third-country national artists, and Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Interior.
- Revisit the issue of mobility beyond the 90/180-day Schengen limit for touring artists and consider an EU-level touring authorisation or equivalent solution adapted to itinerant cultural work across several Member States.
- Analyse short-term exemptions from work permit requirements for cultural activity across Member States and work towards a more harmonised and transparent EU approach.
- Make full use of digital visa and border-management tools to simplify procedures, reduce delays, improve transparency, and make touring-related applications more predictable and manageable in practice.

# Touring to and from the UK

## 1. EU Artists Touring to the UK

Post-Brexit, there is continued uncertainty regarding the correct entry pathway for EU artists: Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS), invitation letter, or Permitted Paid Engagement (PPE). This uncertainty creates legal and financial risk.

A French producing and touring company echoes this confusion: *“Is an invitation letter enough for the UK? Do we need CoS or a PPE? In the case of multiple bands in the same tour bus, is it ok to have one band travelling with CoS and the other one with an invitation letter?” (FR)*

Obtaining a Certificate of Sponsorship requires submitting a fixed and complete list of artists and technicians well in advance, which cannot later be amended. This creates operational inflexibility when teams are not yet fully confirmed. It is *“impossible to modify the pre-established list.” (FR)*

Additional financial burdens include taxation issues, as illustrated by a German dance company: *“Every time we tour in the UK, we have to pay income tax for the non-EU citizens in our company, even though they don’t have any income from the UK. They only receive their monthly salaries that we pay in Germany, and on which taxes and social security are already paid. For us, that is an example of excessive double taxation.” (DE)*

## 2. UK Artists Touring to the EU

The 90/180-day Schengen rule significantly limits touring flexibility and commercial viability, particularly for extended or multi-country tours.

Costs for work permits and visas for a single-country EU tour can reach extremely high amounts. Because of high fees and complexity, organisations often handle visa processes internally, increasing administrative risk and workload.

A UK dance company illustrates this issue: *“We were recently quoted over £50,000 to obtain 16 visas. (...) We ended up having to take on the work in-house. Even when doing this, the costs are over £10,000.” (UK)*

Emerging artists are particularly affected, as increased costs alongside withholding taxes reduce available opportunities.

*“After Brexit, the cost is much higher (...) emerging artists are getting hit the hardest.” (UK)*

Additional burdens and costs are caused by the absence of ‘own-account’ provisions on cabotage in the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement, which affects touring with an organisation’s own orchestra truck (see Chapter on Transport).

### Summary of Administrative Burdens

When touring to and from the UK, performing arts organisations face:

- Cumbersome legislation, including complex UK and EU entry and stay rules
- Lack of flexibility, including fixed CoS lists and the 90/180-day rule
- Lack of communication among authorities, resulting in unclear and contradictory information
- High costs, including high visa and taxation expenses
- Delays, including uncertain visa processing times
- Lack of clear guidance, creating confusion over the correct documentation

## What practitioners wish

- A longer reference period for touring, as the current 90/180-day rule creates multiple obstacles for both touring and receiving organisations. Clearer rules for touring groups and individual artists travelling to the UK.

## What the EU and the UK can do in the area of visa policy and temporary employment in relation to EU-UK cultural exchanges to unleash the potential of the live performance sector

- **For UK artists:**
  - Provide clear guidance and support on the 90/180 rule.
  - Provide information on each country's work permit exemptions, where applicable
  - Consider the recommendations set out above in relation to third-country nationals
- **For EU artists:**
  - Provide clear guidance on the Permitted Paid Engagement route and remove the requirement to provide proof of main employment in the cultural sector
  - Provide clear guidance on Certificates of Sponsorship and allow flexibility to amend the list of persons covered.

## Touring to the US

### Cumbersome and Costly Visa Process

Obtaining US visas is described as increasingly complex, even for single performances. Performance dates must often be fixed up to a year in advance, yet approval is not guaranteed. Costs can reach approximately €1,400 per person, in addition to high legal fees.

Sometimes, entire orchestras must physically attend embassy appointments, as echoed by a French producing company: *"It is necessary to obtain a visa even to perform just one concert in the United States. The process is extremely costly, time-consuming and requires artists to visit the embassy in person."* (FR)

Last-minute personnel changes are not possible once applications have been submitted. Travel insurance arrangements can also become difficult due to uncertainty regarding visa timing and approval.

### Summary of Administrative Burdens

When touring to the US, performing arts organisations face:

- Cumbersome legislation, leading to strict advance planning requirements
- Lack of flexibility, including no possibility for last-minute personnel changes
- Lack of clear guidance from national authorities
- High costs with visa fees and legal expenses

# Other issues related to the functioning of the internal market.

## Public Bodies

### 1. Complicated Procedures of Public Procurement

Cultural organisations that operate as public bodies must comply with rigid public procurement frameworks, often through complex digital systems that are not adapted to the specific realities of artistic production. For larger contracts or purchases, a separate municipal procurement process is required. This generates extensive paperwork and formal procedures, even when organisations have limited administrative capacity. Internal coordination with accounting and tax departments is often slow and complicated, as these departments are not accustomed to handling artist contracts, international touring arrangements, or production-specific tax questions. In some cases, public-body status creates financial disadvantages abroad.

### 2. Difficulty in complying with sustainability reporting

Performing arts organisations recognise the importance of sustainability reporting but report that obligations are expanding without corresponding resources, guidance or methodological clarity. Reporting duties are often unclear, inconsistent and introduced without standardised tools.

Organisations frequently lack the time and staff capacity needed to fulfil these requirements.

Some describe sustainability reporting as a compulsory administrative exercise that increases workload without creating structural incentives for more sustainable touring practices.

There is also a misalignment of responsibilities. Artists are increasingly asked to report on environmental aspects that are often beyond their control and instead under the responsibility of presenters (e.g. energy supply, local transport infrastructure). Meanwhile, additional costs for sustainable production methods are rarely covered in negotiations, and presenters may not coordinate tour routing to enable environmentally efficient scheduling.

## Certification of safety requirements

Fire-safety requirements are governed by national law and therefore differ across countries. Those certificates must be obtained separately for each country, which creates an additional burden for touring productions.

A uniform EU-wide certificate could help simplify this process.

## Digitalisation and administrative systems

While some Member States rely on fully digital systems, including electronic signatures and online certification, others continue to require paper documents bearing physical stamps and handwritten signatures. Despite the eIDAS Regulation (EU) No 910/2014, the digitalisation of administrative practices with national authorities is still unevenly in place across the EU.

This slows down processes and may lead to misunderstandings.

## Conclusion

The live performance sector has great potential to flourish, thanks to the rich diversity of art forms and cultural expressions within the EU, and the sector's openness to cooperation with third countries.

This is illustrated by the thousands of touring groups, venues (large and small), and festivals, ranging from those largely supported by public funding to fully commercial operators.

These different but interconnected ecosystems share similar challenges when it comes to working cross-border and operating in the internal market.

As the testimonies gathered through the mobility survey show, reducing administrative burdens and simplifying rules is not merely a trendy demand.

The live performance sector is a highly labour-intensive and costly sector. It operates with very tight budgets and faces increasing costs, reduced funding, and increasingly unpredictable audience behaviour.

The solutions in each of the policy areas already exist.

Putting them into practice, sometimes through tailored actions, and sometimes as part of ongoing policy developments, will free up time, reduce costs, unlock new cultural opportunities and cooperation, democratise touring prospects for all and facilitate access to culture for audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

Artists and art have for centuries known no borders. 'One Europe, one Market' can help restore this.

# Overview of the EU legal framework

## Social security and posting

[Directive 96/71/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 1996 concerning the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services (PWN Directive)

[Directive 2014/67/EU](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 May 2014 on the enforcement of Directive 96/71/EC concerning the posting of workers in the framework of the provision of services

[Regulation \(EC\) 883/2004](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004 on the coordination of social security systems

[Regulation \(EC\) 987/2009](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 September 2009 laying down the procedure for implementing Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 on the coordination of social security systems

[Communication](#) from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions on digitalisation in social security coordination: facilitating free movement in the Single Market

## Taxation

[OECD Model](#) Tax Convention on Income and on Capital (the OECD Model)

[Council Directive 2011/16/EU](#) of 15 February 2011 on administrative cooperation in the field of taxation and repealing Directive 77/799/EEC

## VAT

[Council Directive 2006/112/EC](#) of 28 November 2006 on the common system of value added tax

[Council Directive 2008/8/EC](#) of 12 February 2008 amending Directive 2006/112/EC as regards the place of supply of services

## Musical instruments

[Regulation \(EC\) 2027/97](#) of the Council of 9 October 1997 on air carrier liability in respect of the carriage of passengers and their baggage by air (implementation of the Montreal Convention)

[Regulation \(EC\) 338/97](#) of 9 December 1996 on the protection of species of wild fauna and flora by regulating trade therein (implementation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, CITES)

## Transport and cabotage

[Agreement](#) on the international occasional carriage of passengers by coach and bus (Interbus Agreement)

[Regulation \(EC\) 1072/2009](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 on common rules for access to the international road haulage market

[Regulation \(EC\) 1073/2009](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 21 October 2009 on common rules for access to the international market for coach and bus services, and amending Regulation (EC) 561/2006

Article 462(3)-(6) of the [Trade and Cooperation Agreement](#) between the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community, of the one part, and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, of the other part

## Customs

[Commission Delegated Regulation \(EU\) 2015/2446](#) of 28 July 2015 supplementing Regulation (EU) 952/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards detailed rules concerning certain provisions of the Union Customs Code

[Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2015/2447](#) of 24 November 2015 laying down detailed rules for implementing certain provisions of Regulation (EU) 952/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council laying down the Union Customs Code

[Regulation \(EU\) 952/2013](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 9 October 2013 laying down the Union Customs Code

## Copyright and rights management

[Directive \(EU\) 2019/790](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on copyright and related rights in the Digital Single Market and amending Directives 96/9/EC and 2001/29/EC

[Directive 2001/29/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 22 May 2001 on the harmonisation of certain aspects of copyright and related rights in the information society

[Directive 2006/115/EC](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 12 December 2006 on rental right and lending right and on certain rights related to copyright in the field of intellectual property

[Directive 2014/26/EU](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 February 2014 on collective management of copyright and related rights and multi-territorial licensing of rights in musical works for online use in the internal market

## Visa and Work Permits

[Directive \(EU\) 2021/1883](#) on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purpose of highly qualified employment (EU Blue Card)

[Directive \(EU\) 2024/1233](#) on a single application procedure for a single permit for third-country nationals to reside and work in the territory of a Member State

[Regulation \(EU\) 2019/1155](#) of 20 June 2019 amending Regulation (EC) 810/2009 of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing a Community Code on Visas (Visa Code)

[Regulation \(EU\) 2016/399](#) of 9 March 2016 on the Union Code on the rules governing the movement of persons across borders (Schengen Borders Code)

[Regulation \(EU\) 2017/2226](#) establishing an Entry/Exit System (EES) to register entry and exit data and refusal of entry data of third-country nationals crossing the external borders of the Member States

[Regulation \(EU\) 2018/1240](#) establishing a European Travel Information and Authorisation System (ETIAS)

[Regulation \(EU\) 2018/1806](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 November 2018 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement

*The Ultimate Cookbook for Cultural Managers: [The Artistic Freedom Regulatory Framework in the EU](#). December 2025.*

*The Ultimate Cookbook for Cultural Managers: [Third-Country National Artists Working in the EU](#). December 2024.*

*The Ultimate Cookbook for Cultural Managers: [Connecting the EU Digital Strategy with live performance organisations](#). December 2023.*

*The Ultimate Cookbook for Cultural Managers: [The EU Green Deal and Live Performance Organisations](#). March 2023. Update planned for Q3 2026.*

*The Ultimate Cookbook for Cultural Managers: Copyright Clearing for Live Events in an International Context. [Original version 2017](#). [Updated version 2021](#).*

*The Ultimate Cookbook for Cultural Managers: Visas for Third Country National Artists Travelling to the Schengen Area. [Original version 2018](#). [Updated version 2020](#).*

*The Ultimate Cookbook for Cultural Managers: Artist Taxation in an International Context. [Original version 2016](#). [Updated version 2021](#).*

*The Ultimate Cookbook for Cultural Managers: VAT in an International Context. [Original version 2016](#). [Updated version 2021](#).*

*The Ultimate Cookbook for Cultural Managers: Social Security in an International Context. [Original version 2016](#). [Updated version 2021](#). New update planned for Q4 2026.*

[Travelling with musical instruments on aeroplanes](#), Updated version 2025. **For members only.**

[International Mobility of Artists and Culture Professionals: The Lexicon](#), 2024.

[Know Your Bow: Tips for Owners and Users of Pernambuco Bows](#), 2023. Update planned for Q2 2026

[CITES Guide “Crossing Borders”](#), Updated version 2021.

[“Cross-border employment in the live performance sector – exploring the social security and employment of highly mobile workers”](#), report and infographics, 2021.

# 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 oblata 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 Scenekunst - *Danish Association for Performing Arts*

**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* | Esittävä taiteen vapaat yhteisöt ry - *Association of Independent Performing Arts in Finland*

**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* | Bundesverband der Konzert- und Veranstaltungswirtschaft e.V., BDKV - *German Association of the Concert and Event Industry*

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

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

**Latvia** Latvijas Profesionālo mūzikas kolektīvu asociācija - *Association of Latvian Professional Music Collectives*

**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

AEEA, 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 | IAMA, International Artist Managers' Association | Opera Europa | PLASA (Europe) | REMA - EEMN, European Early Music Network | PERSPECTIV, Association of Historic Theatres in Europe

## INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

COE-Chamber Orchestra of Europe - London, UK | Cyprus Symphony Orchestra Foundation - Nicosia, CY | deSingel arts center - Antwerp, BE | Feld Entertainment - NL | Malta Philharmonic Orchestra - Floriana, MT | Megaron Athens Concerthall - Athens, GR | Piccolo Teatro di Milano - Teatro d'Europa - Milan, IT | Sport Paleis - Concert & event venue Antwerp, BE | Réunion des Directions Techniques – Association Professionnelle des Responsables Techniques du Spectacle Vivant - FR | Spazju Kreattiv, Malta's National Center for Creativity, Valletta, MT | Studio 100, Belgium

For the most recent list, please visit [www.pearle.eu/members](http://www.pearle.eu/members)



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

It represents, through its national federations and associate members - leading organisations in their respective countries and European networks - more than 13,000 enterprises, both nonprofit 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 the sustainability and promotion of the live performance sector across Europe.

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