

ONE VOICE for EUROPEAN MUSIC

Summary of recommendations

One Voice for European Music Czech Republic working groups

The “One Voice for European Music” process is designed to strengthen the EU’s action in the field of support to the music sector.

The initiative used the momentum of the French Presidency of the Council of the EU to deliver an actionable and realistic set of policy measures designed to better support the music ecosystem at EU level and beyond. The CNM launched a consultation process with a wide spectrum of representative organizations at EU-level to deliver a collegial and inclusive forum for policy debate, through a bottom-up approach of thematic working groups, culminating with a clear and directly workable policy deliverable.

In continuation of the Centre National de la Musique (CNM) initiative, SoundCzech, the Czech Music Office, launched working group meetings to address the current state and overall status of European venues, and also the question of the status of artists. The aim of these was to provide a new set of recommendations within the framework of the One Voice for European Music initiative.

Two thematic working groups, each holding two discussion sessions, focused on different key priorities identified through preliminary consultation with the sector, organized on the 28th of September in Prague.

The working groups focused on:

- Recommendations to address **the current state and overall status of venues** (with the contribution of Live DMA, Enlarge Europe, Music Cities Network, and EMPE);
- Recommendations to address **the current state and overall status of artists** (with the contribution of IMMF, Czech Musicians Union, Czech Music Managers Forum, First Music Contact Ireland).

Background of the working groups

The background of both working groups is rooted in the learnings and conclusions made from the last two years of COVID-19 pandemic, the current Russian War on Ukraine and the less than positive prospects for the sector.

Contrary to the hopes of many, the drop in visitors in live music venues induced by the COVID-19 crisis wasn’t a short term effect that would bounce back in a year, but something more significant, highlighting problems and failings in the music ecosystem. The problems venues and artists are facing have an impact on the entire music ecosystem.

Main contributors and authors to the recommendations

Audrey Guerre -coordinator of Live DMA

Laura Ferrero - Kvaka 22, EEnlarge Europe Network,

Eszter Décsy - EEnlarge Europe coordinator

Monika Klementova - SoundCzech- Arts and Theatre Institute

Virgo Silaama - EMEE research coordinator

Petr Blažek - Music Managers Forum - Czech Republic

Jake Beaumont-Nesbitt- International Music Managers Forum

Márton Náray - SoundCzech- Arts and Theatre Institute

The functioning of small and medium-sized concert halls, key players for emerging artists

Recommendation 1: A Recognition of live music venues as cultural operators across Europe

Music venues are an integral part of the music and more broadly cultural ecosystem, linked to talent development, employment, tourism, social welfare, trade (music instruments and PA, etc.), entertainment, catering industry, etc. just to mention a few. On a European level, venues are key stepping stones of cultural collaborations. They help to connect local communities (artists, inhabitants, professionals) via international collaborations (cross promotions, artist residency programs, international production etc.) with their international peers. Unlike many other art forms, music venues are able to host together trade and culture under one roof in a way that is beneficial for all.

We recommend crafting a definition of "Live Music Venues, agreed upon across the European Union, to help the European member states make more harmonized policies towards the venues and music in general. The working group members collected a few key attributes to help the definition, however they encourage a common minimum European criteria to define this type of actors.

Recommendation 2: A European audience development strategy

Audience development has been a key theme for discussions and debates in many conferences globally. COVID lockdowns lasted long enough to estrange the once concert-going public and got many of them out of the habit of outdoor entertainment. Instead, many got more accustomed to the "Stay-At-Home Entertainment".. Two years of lockdown was also enough to bring about new entertainment models for younger audiences who were never exposed to live concerts. However, the full effect of live concerts cannot be reproduced in a home environment. The thrill, and joy to see one's favourite artist playing live creates a healthier and more connected community and eases stress levels.¹

For potential audience rejuvenation and expansion there should first be a proper research strategy to collect and analyse data about audience preferences and behaviour, communications channels, etc. Secondly, recommendations to the venues can be worked out. In addition, it must be kept in mind that the trends are changing fast, therefore, the pace of data collection and research must keep up with it as well.

In addition to supporting venues to survive, we believe a strategy to boost concert visits via different schemes would have the required effect to slowly bring the public back to the venues². To mention a few examples:

- VAT cuts on Cultural events to ease the pressure on increasing tickets prices;
- free transportation with concert tickets.

1 <https://www.ucf.edu/pegasus/your-brain-on-music/>

2 <https://www.live-dma.eu/try-angle/>

Recommendation 3: A Reduced and harmonized VAT for cultural goods and services

Harmonized, and reduced cultural taxation, is a long standing discussion within the EU Commission. This actual suggestion was already part of the first set of One Voice For European Music recommendation coordinated by CNM³

Status of artists

Recommendation 1: A recognised, harmonised Pan-European definition of artists, and art related professions.

In order to effectively support artists, and art related professions, definitions have to be harmonised within the European Union. A significant number of Member States currently lack definition, which creates a major objective for the music sector's sustainable development.

Participants encourage the Eu Commission, via the European Music Desk possible working groups to create the definition of artists, and art related professions that all Member States can use in the future.

Recommendation 2: A recognised, harmonised, and credited research methodology, that EU Member States would agree to use as baseline information on the music sector.

There is no overall methodology, agreed upon, by all EU Member States when research data is collected on the music sector. That creates an obstacle to base recommendations at national levels towards EU Member States, when the music sector is aiming for implementation of legislative changes.

We recommend the creation of an agreed, and harmonised music research methodology. This could be delivered by the European Music Observatory.

Recommendation 3: A recognised Pan-European research on the turnover of music ecosystem

In order to set an EU wide applied social benefit structure for artists, and art-workers, more data and information is needed on the segmentation, and turnover of the music sector. The Pan-European research could be the base of a social support model worked on by the European Music Desk.

Recommendation 4: Creation of a social support scheme for artists, and art professionals

We recommend the creation of a Pan-European model, on the social support methodology for artists, and art workers. This methodology can be the base of EU member states to implement in their countries. Via this model, European programs such as Next Generation EU could be implemented more effectively.