

Quality Jobs Roadmap

Reply to Social Partner Consultation

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Introduction

Pearle*- Live Performance Europe, representing over 13,000 organisations and companies in the music, performing arts, and live event sectors, has taken duly note of the European Commission's initiative on the creation of a Quality Jobs Roadmap

As a European employers' association, Pearle* takes part in the European sectoral social dialogue. We welcome this consultation as an important opportunity to contribute to shaping a roadmap that aims to promote fair job transitions between different statuses and employment periods, as well as inclusive and sustainable working conditions across all sectors. In the live performance sector, where work is often project-based, seasonal, and involves a high proportion of freelance and self-employed professionals, alongside long-term employment, the roadmap must recognise the specific nature of diverse work patterns within a broader societal context.

A discussion on quality jobs also needs to go hand in hand with the provision of measures that facilitate and enable such an approach.

As Pearle expressed in its statement¹ on the occasion of the exchange between European Vice President Minzatu and social partners on 16 April: "Referring to a Pearle* declaration² adopted in November 2023 on good employment, we reiterate the role of employers as facilitators for work within a context of fair conditions for those employed by and working with them, thereby adhering to existing laws".

Pearle* is committed to ensuring that the diverse realities of employment in the performing arts are duly reflected and addressed in the roadmap's priorities and actions.

Below are our comments on the questions raised in the consultation.

¹ <https://www.pearle.eu/positionpaper/-2>

² <https://www.pearle.eu/positionpaper/pearle-declaration-on-good-employment-by-live-performance-organisations>

Comments

1) Are we going in the right direction for addressing the challenges and taking on the opportunities arising from the changes in the world of work?

The Quality Jobs Roadmap builds upon the right foundations, notably through its recognition of the profound changes affecting the labour market, including the green and digital transitions. Its reference to the initiatives taken over the past few years and recently, while aligning with the principles of the European Pillar of Social Rights, sets a solid basis for action. Pearle* also welcomes the coherence with broader EU initiatives such as the Pact for European Social Dialogue, the Union of Skills, and the Action Plan on Labour and Skills Shortages, which together can contribute to a more resilient and inclusive labour market.

However, in the context of a Quality Jobs Roadmap, consideration should be given to the diverse realities of the different sectors, including the cultural and creative sectors (CCS), which are often overlooked in labour market policy discussions and within the *Competitiveness Compass*, despite their significant economic, social and cultural contribution. The live performance sector, for instance, benefits from an abundance of artistic talent, which is an area of the labour market that does not function according to the straight logic of 'offer and demand'. As such artists also present unique employment characteristics, including, hybrid forms of employment (often referred to as 'freelance' work), irregular work schedules due to the project- and artistic production-processes, limited or uneven access to social protection, and cross-border mobility, all of which must be adequately reflected in policy responses³. On the other hand, and especially since the Covid-crisis, in the live performance sector, there is a shortage of technical skills and other jobs related to production and administration (marketing, communication, digital, accounting)⁴. This makes the discussion on a European quality job roadmap complex and highly challenging.

2) What is necessary for quality jobs to be future oriented and future-proof?

We fully agree with the Commission's observation that "As a starting point, ensuring conditions that allow companies to create quality jobs in Europe is key for the well-being and motivation of workers"⁵. Indeed, many factors contribute to the presence of quality jobs: from good public transport, good roads, safety on the street and in the neighborhoods where people work, childcare facilities and elderly care, access to housing, urban quality of live, education facilities, social services, and more.

We believe that future-proof quality jobs require adaptable frameworks that support:

- **Access to social protection** for all workers, irrespective of their employment status, including self-employed and project-based workers, and bearing in mind longer working careers.
- **Recognition of non-standard and cross-border work patterns**, including portability of rights, clarity on applicable labour laws and coordination of social security systems.

³ <https://www.pearle.eu/positionpaper/pearle-position-on-an-eu-framework-for-the-social-and-professional-situation-of-artists-and-workers-in-the-cultural-and-creative-sectors>

⁴ <https://www.pearle.eu/positionpaper/shortages-of-skills-in-technical-production-and-administrative-functions-in-the-live-performance-need-to-be-urgently-addressed-as-part-of-the-european-year-of-skills>

⁵ European Commission, *Dedicated Hearing with Social Partners on a Quality Jobs Roadmap*, 30 April 2025, Background Note, page 2, fourth paragraph

- **Skills development and continuous learning**, tailored to the evolving needs of the live performance sector, especially digital skills, technical competencies, and green transition awareness.
- **Mental health and well-being** in working environments that are increasingly characterised by hybrid work, and which may require specific sectoral approaches
- **Gender equality, diversity and inclusion** policies that incentivise and support workplaces which embrace those goals
- **Balanced regulation that avoids one-size-fits-all approaches** and supports innovation and flexibility while ensuring adequate protection schemes that allow for reward and incentivise organisations, employers and workers to provide for autonomy, intrapreneurship, personal growth, and intergenerational exchanges.

3) *Do you agree with the proposed key areas linked to job quality identified?*

We broadly agree with the three pillars proposed in the Quality Jobs Roadmap and welcome the European Commission's ambition to promote fair, sustainable, and future-oriented working environments across the EU. However, we underline the role of sectoral social partners in this context. Regarding the cultural and creative sectors (CCS), it is noted that those are often overlooked in mainstream policy design despite their significant contribution to employment, social cohesion, and Europe's cultural identity. According to recent figures from Eurostat⁶, in 2023, there were 7.8 million people in cultural employment across the EU, which corresponds to 3.8% of the total employment. Of this 1,02 million people are active in the creative, arts, and entertainment sector (NACE 90). In this regard, the quality jobs roadmap should leave room for sectoral social partners to collaborate on specific issues and develop joint actions.

Fair working conditions must take into account the unique nature of employment in different sectors. . Work in the live performance sector is often characterised by short-term, project-based contracts, frequent cross-border mobility, and a high rate of freelance and self-employed professionals. In this context, **promoting fair working conditions also means addressing structural challenges such as fragmented access to social protection, the practical and disproportionate administrative burdens to employ a non-resident artist for a short-term contract resulting from the coordination rules on social security between Member States, the posting of workers for very short periods, and issues related to artist double taxation impacting their respective income.** Reducing administrative burdens, improving the alignment of national frameworks in these areas would substantially contribute to more equitable working conditions and facilitate fair labour mobility⁷. The Commission expressed its intention for the Single Market Strategy to tackle administrative and regulatory burdens. Health and safety at work is equally crucial, especially for those involved in technical, touring, or physically demanding roles in live events. Any EU-wide approach to job quality must recognise and adapt to these sectoral realities. Quality jobs rely on good functioning public services and citizens' access to information, support, and communication with relevant public authorities as those provide trust in governance structures on which one can rely.

Digitalisation brings valuable opportunities in general, as it allows to shape more flexible working environments and providing autonomy to people in organising and managing their work. These developments can support resilience and competitiveness in different sectors. Secondly, digitalisation can also enhance the increasing complexity of reporting obligations

⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Culture_statistics_-_cultural_employment

⁷ Pearle* response to the consultation of social partners on the Single Market Strategy, submitted on 25 February 2025 and response to call for evidence: [Feedback from: Pearle* - Live Performance Europe](#)

and, in the context of cross-border work, whilst it also allows for improved access of citizens and workers to communicate with public authorities and agencies. Finally, the increasing use of AI and digital tools must be approached with caution, ensuring that the creators and artists are sufficiently protected in the context of Generative AI. Intellectual property, including copyrights and neighbouring rights, is an essential element of remuneration. It must remain a cornerstone of the digital environment, as it underpins job creation and sustainability in the sector. The benefits of digital innovation cannot come at the expense of creators' rights or the long-term viability of cultural and creative work.

Fair transitions in terms of preparing for labor shifts are particularly relevant for our sector, which is constantly adapting to technological shifts, environmental concerns, and changing audience behaviour, and as the CCS are characterised by SMEs and micro-enterprises. According to recently published figures by Eurostat⁸ in 2022, there were 2.03 million cultural enterprises in the EU, representing 6.3% of all businesses within the business economy, whereby 78% of workers in the creative, arts and entertainment activities were employed by micro enterprises (employing fewer than 10 people). Anticipating future skills needs, ensuring access to reskilling opportunities, and supporting workers during structural changes in a sector as a whole are of equal importance as in the case of the restructuring of a large company. EU programmes such as the Union of Skills can play a vital role in facilitating sectoral transitions, and should allow to tailor it to the specific learning needs and realities of our sector, including non-formal and lifelong learning pathways.

4) In your view, which area(s) should be prioritised at the EU level, and why? What specific measures and tools should be used? Please distinguish between legislative, non-legislative and funding.

Based on the challenges and opportunities outlined above, we believe the EU first and foremost should focus on the shared issues across the EU and across sectors, whilst specific attention through targeted actions could be undertaken addressing the specific needs of sectors with non-standard and cross-border employment patterns, such as the cultural and creative sectors (CCS). In doing so, the EU can help ensure that quality jobs are inclusive, future-oriented, and accessible to all workers. It is crucial to endorse the fact that small and often micro-sized companies need simple administrative processes, which allow them to comply in a straightforward manner. The lower the level of administrative burden, the higher the compliance rate and success of the implementation. As a goal, administrative processes for small companies should only be one click away, which is in particular important when working with fixed-term contracts for specific projects.

Legislative priorities:

In general, the current European legislative frameworks on employment, health and safety, gender equality and anti-discrimination provide an excellent basis for the quality jobs roadmap. In our opinion, concerning legislative priorities, there is an important need to focus on the implementation and enforcement of the existing EU legislation to meet the standards, conditions and requirements for quality jobs. Addressing the gaps between legislation and daily practice can be facilitated through administrative decisions or multilateral agreements in areas of social security, posted workers and cross-border taxation.

⁸ [Culture statistics - cultural enterprises - Statistics Explained - Eurostat](#)

- **Social security coordination**

- Adopt an administrative decision to overcome the disproportionate administrative burdens and cumbersome procedures when employing a non-resident person for a very short period, thereby making full use of EESSI, and realising a win for the social security administrations, for the artist in the case of the live performance (or other non-resident person), and the employer alike.
- Provide an exemption for posting of very short duration as part of the ongoing review of Regulation 883/04.

- **Posting of workers**

- Finalisation of the legislative process on an eDeclaration portal⁹ to streamline and harmonise compliance across Member States.

- **Taxation**

- Encourage addressing administrative burdens on cross-border taxation through a European common approach, such as a recommendation or multilateral agreement, on double or excessive cross-border artist taxation, thereby treating employed artists in the same way as other employees and providing for a threshold on the income earned for self-employed artists.

Non-legislative measures:

- Provide guidance and tools to support Member States in aligning national frameworks on social protection and labour mobility, and further expand *Your Europe* with targeted sectoral information.
- Improve coordination through integration of digital tools (such as ESSpass, Digital wallet) between Member States to ensure the portability of social protection rights in a more granular way, particularly for self-employed and mobile workers.
- Provide for clarification of applicable labour laws at the national level and in the cross-border context, and support sectoral social partners on specific sectoral issues
- Incentivise sectors that take action on diversity, inclusion and gender equality, as part of a quality jobs roadmap.
- Promote recognition and support in respective member states for the establishment of representative employer organisations in sectors such as the live performance, to allow for genuine autonomous bipartite social dialogue and collective bargaining.
- Continue to foster the inclusion of sectoral social partners in EU-level consultations and dialogues to ensure that future policies are grounded in sector-specific realities.

Funding tools:

- Increase funding for skills development and lifelong learning, with a focus on digital, technical, green transition, and transversal soft skills.

⁹ [Proposal for a regulation on a public interface connected to the Internal Market Information System for the declaration of posting of workers and amending Regulation \(EU\) No 1024/2012](#)

- Support cross-border cooperation projects, knowledge exchange, and awareness-raising actions with a focus on inclusion and diversity through EU programmes.
- Invest in capacity-building initiatives for sectoral social partners both at the European level and national level (such as through ESF+) to strengthen their ability to undertake social dialogue and engage in collective bargaining and represent their members effectively.

Overall, a strategic mix of ongoing legislative reforms, non-legislative coordination, and targeted funding is essential to promote quality jobs across all sectors and ensure no workers or sectors are left behind.

5) Which initiative can you commit to deliver as social partners at the EU level?

Pearle* is committed to:

- **Continuing dialogue** with European trade union partners in our sector to strengthen joint actions on improving working conditions as set out in its joint multi-annual work programme, with a particular focus on the realities and needs of the live performance sector, and in dialogue with relevant Commission departments
- **Promoting good practices on skills development and job-to-job transitions**, including through EU-funded cooperation projects.
- **Disseminating information and raising awareness among our members** on the relevance of social dialogue and available EU tools, while also keeping them informed of evolving compliance obligations. At the same time, **we actively relay the specific challenges faced by the sector to policymakers, helping to ensure that regulatory frameworks are realistic, proportionate, and fit for purpose.**

6) What is better done at EU and national level?

At EU level, the role should be to establish common principles and frameworks that promote quality employment across Member States, in line with existing initiatives such as the European pillar of social rights, the Union of skills, and bearing in mind the diversity of the realities of the different sectors, and within. The European Union is also well placed to provide guidance and foster mutual learning between countries while funding skills development, innovation, and initiatives that support fair working conditions. **Furthermore, it can play a key role in facilitating cross-border labour mobility, which is particularly relevant in the live performance sector.**

At the national level, it is essential to adapt and implement measures in a way that reflects the specific characteristics of each country's system and the structure of the different sectors, including live performance. National authorities are key to designing policies that respond to domestic labour market conditions, legal frameworks, and the needs of workers and employers on the ground.

In addition, at the sectoral level, there is a crucial continuous activity in identifying and addressing challenges through direct social dialogue between employers and workers. This includes developing joint actions, exchanging good practices, and, where appropriate, establishing a framework of actions at the European level, or developing at the national level,

sectoral or company level collective agreements, or other (new) forms of cooperation and actions between social partners, that reflect the realities of the sector.

7) What specific measures can be implemented to increase collective bargaining coverage and to implement the Council recommendation on strengthening social dialogue in the Member States?

Member States should be encouraged to support representative organisations in the cultural and creative sectors, including employer organisations, which are often under-recognised within national frameworks. **Strengthening the role and visibility of these organisations is essential to ensure balanced representation and effective participation in social dialogue.**

There is also an urgent need to build capacity, raise awareness and train ministries of culture, including civil society, on the principles of social dialogue, the role of social partners, and the functioning of social dialogue. It is noted that there is still a gap since the enlargement of the EU in 2004 and 2007, which has only slowly closed.

It is equally important to **promote capacity-building programmes, provide for financial support (such as through ESF+ or targeted country recommendations) to be able to set up an association, undertake studies and initiate actions, for social partners in our sector. This is necessary to enable them to engage more effectively in collective bargaining and negotiations.** Tailored support can empower organisations to navigate complex labour market dynamics and contribute meaningfully to improving working conditions.

The **correct implementation of the Council Recommendation must also be ensured**, with monitoring mechanisms that take into account the diversity of sectors, including the live performance.. In parallel, EU-funded research should be supported to assess the current state of social dialogue and collective bargaining in the cultural and creative sectors, helping to identify obstacles and inform targeted policy measures.

Conclusion

Pearle* welcomes the European Commission's initiative to develop a Quality Jobs Roadmap and appreciates the opportunity to contribute to this consultation. We firmly believe that the success of this initiative will depend on its capacity to reflect the diversity of the European labour market, including the specific features of the cultural and creative sectors.

. To ensure that no workers or sectors are left behind, the roadmap must acknowledge the realities of non-standard forms of employment, support good functioning cross-border mobility, and provide tailored support for skills development, mental well-being, and resilience in the face of constant change.

As a European employers' organisation and active participant in the sectoral social dialogue, Pearle* remains committed to engaging in constructive dialogue with the European institutions and trade union partners. We will continue to promote good practices, raise awareness among our members, and advocate for policies that are fair, inclusive, and fit for purpose. We encourage the Commission to continue to work closely with sectoral social partners throughout the development and implementation of the Quality Jobs Roadmap, ensuring that it delivers meaningful improvements for workers and employers alike.