



One Year Without Culture:

Pearle* urges EU and its Member States to take scientific evidence into account and open up the live performance sector to audiences

Brussels, 8 March 2021

This anniversary is not to celebrate: Throughout the EU, the cultural sector was the first to be confined in March 2020 and seems to be the last one to re-open. For numerous sectors and professionals, exemptions have been found, and been listened to, while the EU, Member States and local public authorities still refrain from presenting a genuine strategy and plan.

The provisional toll of the pandemic is heavy for the sector: As the EY study 'Rebuilding Europe' revealed, the performing arts and music are the worst hit, with estimated **90% less revenues for performing arts and 75% less for music** – and this only in 2020.

Meanwhile, scientific studies on aerosol and CO2 measurements like this one conducted by the German Fraunhofer Heinrich-Hertz-Institute indicate that **concert halls, theatres, venues are not places of infection**. The study concludes that in a first phase of reopening, at least 50 % capacity in a checkerboard arrangement, with one seat free between each seated group, can be recommended. It is however reminded that the sector must be able to operate again at **full capacity** in order to survive.

In October 2020, Pearle* called on the EU and Member States to give culture a future through a recovery plan based on three pillars: **survive, invest, resilience**. What has happened since then? Due to a lack of perspective, many talented artists and skilled workers are leaving the sector. Moreover, live performance organisations are unable to realistically plan ahead which undermines any prospect of a quick restart.

Lockdown in various countries has shown: **the access to culture remains an essential need for people during times of pandemic**.

As vaccination is slowly happening across Europe, allowing tourism to resume, it should go hand in hand with re-opening of live performance activities – with requisite care and considering developed health safety concepts. Pearle* and its members stand ready to work with the EU and Member States on a **strategic plan for an immediate and mid-term restart**.

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Note to editors:

Pearle*- Live Performance Europe is a European federation representing through its members more than 10,000 theatres, theatre production companies, orchestras and music ensembles, opera houses, ballet and dance companies, festivals, concert halls, venues, other organisations within the performing arts and music sector across Europe, as well as service suppliers. The aim of this non-profit making organisation is the establishing of a stable environment by supporting sustainability and promotion of Live Performance across Europe.