



PRESS RELEASE

At the General Assembly meeting in Antwerp Pearle members discuss EU Culture policy and call for an improved exemption for stage lighting in the proposed ecodesign regulation

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On 23 and 24 November, Pearle* members from across Europe met for their 56th General Assembly in Antwerp, Belgium. The meeting was chaired by President of Pearle* Géza Kovács, and hosted by the Flemish organisation of performing arts organisations, oKo.

At the centre of the debate was an exchange on EU Culture policies with Ms Barbara Gessler, head of unit Creative Europe at DG EAC at the European Commission.

Ms Gessler underlined that for the first time there was a clear convergence between the policy basis for culture, described in the New European Agenda for Culture of May 2018, and the future Creative Europe programme objectives (to start in 2021). She reminded participants that 2018 was a year which allowed to create a momentum for culture for various reasons and that it was necessary to take this opportunity to build a strong case for culture in future, including music and performing arts.

Participants also discussed copyright legislation and a court case recently won in first instance by 33 Flemish concert halls and festivals against the Belgian collective society SABAM. The cultural organisations went to court following an increase of copyright fees up to 37%, based on the general turnover of the festivals and venues. The judge concluded that the new tariff scheme constitutes an abuse and Sabam was found guilty of unfair market practices. SABAM lodged an appeal, the decision is expected at the end of March 2019.

In workshops organised in cooperation with the European Festival Association and the framework of the European EFA RISE project, Pearle* members discussed how to best prepare live events in times of terror threat and assess the vulnerability of a theatre, concert hall or other venue.

Participants also exchanged on a wide range of topics of common interest, such as the revision of the posting of workers Directive and implementation of the enforcement Directive, both applying in the context of touring activities.

The proposed ecodesign regulation raised concerns among participants, as it would have a significant impact on stage lighting, without providing for noteworthy energy saving in theatres and other venues. In view of the vote of the Member State expert group on

ecodesign on 17 December, Pearle* members called for an improved exemption for stage and studio lighting, taking into account technical and artistic needs of the live performance sector as well as potential financial repercussions.

Simultaneously to the General Assembly meeting, Pearle* members had the opportunity to attend the 2nd BtS academy with seminars on leadership, work-life-balance, a respectful work environment and skills in the context of the European project [Behind the Stage](#).

All associations that applied to take part in the [Pearle* 2018 Awards](#) were invited to briefly present their project. Géza Kovács, President of Pearle*, emphasised: "Less about competition, it is about celebrating so many of the initiatives, undertaken in different ways and in diverse environments by employers associations to create a level playing field for those working in the live performance sector, to step up skills and competences and strive for equality and diversity."

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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 and other organisations within the performing arts and music sector across Europe. The aim of this non-profit making organisation is the establishing of a stable environment by supporting sustainability and promotion of the Performing Arts across Europe.