



RESEARCH REPORT:

STRENGTHENING CAPACITIES IN THE LIVE PERFORMANCE SECTOR



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0. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This final report summarises findings from an EU co-funded project on “Strengthening Capacities in the Live Performance Sector”, implemented by the European Social Partners in the Live Performance sector, namely Pearle* – Live Performance Europe on the employers’ side, and the Media, Entertainment & Arts sector of UNI Europa (EURO-MEI), the International Federation of Actors (FIA), and the International Federation of Musicians (FIM) on the workers’ side. At the beginning of the project a survey has been carried out among all European members of Pearle*, FIM, FIA and EURO-MEI. Its main goal was to map the collective agreements and social partners’ initiatives that are gathered in the database presented in the annex of this report. The survey also helped to identify topics for trainings activities designated for social partners and further research. The following three thematic priorities were selected for the project’s research activities:

- Artificial Intelligence and its impact on the live performance sector,
- Health and safety (with a specific focus on mental health), and
- Climate-change related challenges.

The report presents evidence, analysis and recommendations on each topic, reflecting the sector’s evolving landscape and the central role of social dialogue.

0.1 AI UNPLUGGED: THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE LIVE PERFORMANCE SECTOR

AI technologies are reshaping creative, managerial, and labour relations in live performance, creating both opportunities and risks. The sector is experimenting with AI-generated plays, music composition, choreography, and audience interaction, unlocking new artistic possibilities and production efficiencies. However, AI also presents significant challenges, including copyright infringement, misuse of performers’ likenesses through deepfakes, and the potential displacement or transformation of certain job roles. Regulatory developments, notably the EU AI Act, introduce a risk-based framework with obligations on transparency, accountability, and copyright protection, critically impacting the sector.

Social partners emphasise the need for clear consent mechanisms, fair remuneration, and updated legal measures to protect creators' rights while harnessing AI's potential. Engagement and cooperation are essential in navigating this rapidly evolving technological environment.

0.2 “THE SHOW MUST GO ON” SAFELY - HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE LIVE PERFORMANCE SECTOR

The live performance sector faces diverse health and safety risks including physical hazards, demanding working conditions, and emerging psychosocial challenges. Mental health concerns are intensified by irregular hours, job insecurity and touring pressures. Young performers, those from less privileged backgrounds, as well as older workers, experience specific vulnerabilities. The sector has seen positive developments including risk assessment tools, sector-specific health initiatives, and mental health support programmes tailored to live performance professionals. Challenges remain in relation to accessible mental health services and the integration of well-being in occupational safety frameworks. Social partners play a pivotal role in raising awareness and fostering inclusive policies that address mental health. Continued investment in training, data collection, and support mechanisms is vital for sustainable careers and safe working environments.

0.3 “RIDERS ON THE STORM”: SOCIAL PARTNERS FACING CLIMATE CHALLENGES IN LIVE PERFORMANCE

Though not a major emitter, the live performance sector contributes to greenhouse gas emissions, primarily through audience and artist travel, energy use in venues, and production logistics. The sector is also increasingly exposed to climate-related risks such as extreme weather-related disruptions and health hazards. Leading the way, social partners and other stakeholders have engaged in a variety of international and national initiatives promoting sustainability practices, from adopting ISO 20121 standards to developing carbon calculators, slow touring strategies, and green contractual clauses. Collaborative efforts and strategic policies support a greener, resilient sector while addressing fairness concerns to ensure inclusion. Future work must balance emission reductions with social equity and resilience-building.



INTRODUCTION



This publication comes as a result of consultations, conversations and capacity-building activities carried out as part of the European Union co-funded project on “Strengthening Capacities in the Live Performance Sector”. The project was implemented by European Social Partners in the Live Performance sector, namely Pearle* – Live Performance Europe on the employers’ side, the Media, Entertainment & Arts Sector of UNI Europa (EURO-MEI), the International Federation of Actors (FIA), and the International Federation of Musicians (FIM) on the workers’ side. Its primary objective was to support European and national social partners in strengthening their ability to respond to structural and emerging challenges affecting the sector. In recent years, the European social partners in the live performance sector have implemented diverse joint projects in the context of the European Sectoral Social Dialogue. The topics covered by these activities include gender equality, risk assessment, skills development and social dialogue in the commercial live performance sector.

Building on the outcomes of previous and current joint projects and the tradition of social dialogue within the European Union, this project aimed at deepening the understanding of selected topics shaping the future of live performance, ranging from technological transformation and health and safety to climate action and fair working conditions. This includes providing knowledge and tools for social partners to anticipate changes and act collectively.

The research underpinning this work was designed to capture a comprehensive picture of social dialogue initiatives and collective achievements across the EU Member States, as well as selected other European countries such as Switzerland, Norway, and the United Kingdom.

This involved:

- mapping existing social partner initiatives, achievements, and collective agreements in the sector;
- creating a database of such resources accessible to all stakeholders;
- sharing information with national social partners on the themes central to the European social dialogue work programme and wider EU policy agenda, including negotiating and collective bargaining, the growing impact of generative Artificial Intelligence, health and safety and the green transformation¹.

1 Detailed description of the research methodology can be found in the annex.

In addition, a survey has been carried out among all European members of Pearle*, FIM, FIA and EURO-MEI. While its main goal was to map the collective agreements² and social partners initiatives, its results also guided the selection of the three thematic priorities for the project's training and research activities, alongside a specific social partner training activity:

- Artificial Intelligence and its impact on the live performance sector,
- Health and safety (with a specific focus on mental health), and
- Climate change related challenges.

The project, therefore, included three dedicated training seminars aligned with the thematic priorities identified through the survey. The first seminar, held in May 2024 in Paris, focused on negotiation techniques that are crucial for collective bargaining and thus social dialogue. It combined research presentations, best-practice sharing, and practical negotiation skills training to empower social partners. The second training, conducted in December 2024 in Warsaw, addressed the impact of artificial intelligence on various aspects of the sector, including legal and artistic challenges, with sessions featuring legal experts and practitioners from multiple countries. The third seminar, in May 2025 in Antwerp, was devoted to health and safety, with particular attention to mental health and career transition support. It featured expert presentations, case studies, and strategies to tackle emerging health challenges and promote career sustainability in the live performance sector. The final online training took place in November 2025. It covered the impact of climate change on the live performance sector and presents green and sustainable practices from the sector.

The following three chapters of this report are devoted to the three topics identified through the survey mentioned above.

CHAPTER I EXAMINES the growing role of artificial intelligence and its potential implications for creation, management, and labour relations in the live performance sector, underlining both opportunities and challenges.

CHAPTER II DISCUSSES health and safety, with a particular focus on mental health. It analyses occupational risks and preventive measures specific to live performance work and documents innovative responses to protect well-being and career sustainability.

CHAPTER III HIGHLIGHTS the implications of climate change on the sector. The discussion covers both adaptation strategies and resil-

² The database of collective agreements is an inherent part of the project. More information can be found here: <https://ipsocialpartners.notion.site/Strengthening-Capacities-in-the-Live-Performance-Sector-1dddb594d14d805ea6d9f271d6107dda?pvs=143>

ience-building measures as well as decarbonisation strategies and solutions, including an overview of inspiring initiatives from across Europe.

This final report is thus both a synthesis of the project outcomes and a resource. It documents achievements to date, identifies gaps and areas for future cooperation. The presented information and recommendations aim to strengthen the capacity of live performance sector stakeholders to respond to evolving challenges through informed, inclusive, and forward-looking social dialogue.

CHAPTER I. **AI UNPLUGGED: THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE LIVE PERFORMANCE SECTOR**



I.1. A SELECTIVE SNAPSHOT OF AI USES IN THE SECTOR

This section provides examples of AI applications in the live performance sector. The examples certainly do not cover all interesting applications that are likely to emerge with increasing capabilities of AI solutions and the creativity of performers.

AI tools were invited to co-create theatre plays in part to ask questions about associated risks. One such attempt is *AI*, directed by Jennifer Tang at London's Young Vic theatre. The play had its premiere in August 2021.³ The play's main protagonist is GPT-3. In front of the audience it is given a prompt, like "write me a play about artificial intelligence," GPT-3 spits out pages of human-sounding text. But later it turns out that the technology has serious flaws that cannot be overlooked. The director observed that

THE TECHNOLOGY WOULD RELIABLY CAST ONE OF THEIR MIDDLE EASTERN ACTORS IN STEREOTYPICAL ROLES: AS A TERRORIST, AS A RAPIST – OR AS A MAN WITH A BACKPACK FULL OF EXPLOSIVES.

This poses a huge concern about how theatre-makers can prevent a piece of technology/tool from creating more harm when they're not the creators of the technology.

Another interesting theatrical experiment is Annie Dorsen's *Prometheus Firebringer*, a 2023 play at the Theatre for a New Audience space in Brooklyn.⁴ It is a variation combining AI-generated versions of the lost Aeschylus' *Prometheus Firebringer* based on scholarly texts on its likely content. Combining AI-generated theatre masks and AI-generated computer voices, the play features the director giving a talk built from quotes from various texts that trigger the audience to think about the relationship between technology and power. She concludes, "Artists need to think seriously about how these models work, what they do, and what they mean for the future of both making and experiencing art."

In 2021, a co-operation between the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics of the Charles University in Prague and Švanda Theatre and DAMU created a theatre play, 90% of which was written by the lan-

“

ARTISTS NEED TO THINK SERIOUSLY ABOUT HOW THESE MODELS WORK, WHAT THEY DO, AND WHAT THEY MEAN FOR THE FUTURE OF BOTH MAKING AND EXPERIENCING ART.”

³ See <https://www.youngvic.org/whats-on/ai>

⁴ See <https://culturesauce.com/2023/09/19/prometheus-firebringer-review-annie-dorsen/>

guage model GPT-2 from OpenAI. Human co-writers only provided an introductory scene. The play includes eight scenes describing a robot's journey in the human world and it's a mixture of black comedy and existential drama.⁵

Experiments related to engaging AI in production of musical performances include attempts described by journalists at *Broadway World* regarding the results of prompting ChatGPT to produce a musical for Broadway⁶. The 2023 article pointed to several problems with the quality of resulting work including a production that appeared to be close to a plagiarised version of a movie. Another experiment run by a production company and published on their website in May 2024 concluded with a statement: “for better, or worse, AI can create musicals. It's up to us to spy on our digital competition, and do better than it can.”⁷

Experiments with music improvisation in live concerts involving AI tools are implemented by several artists, including Iván Paz. “If your algorithm is acting at a really low level, then you feel like playing an instrument, because you are actually tweaking, for example, the synthesis parameters,” Paz said. “But if the algorithm is defining the form of the musical piece, then it's like playing with an agent that is defining what is going to happen next.”⁸

Experiments with algorithms have for a long time been part of the dance scene. Already in 1995, Merce Cunningham, a choreographer, worked with a program to manipulate avatars on a screen. The intention was to grasp dancers' natural habits, analyse them and try to create something new.⁹ AI tools are often used to explore the complexity and limitations of the human body. AI applications are also used to integrate audiences in the performance. In October 2024, AΦE launched an AI-driven dance production where the main protagonist is an AI entity who co-created the work jointly with two humans. During the performance the AI figure appears on an LED cube that can be moved by the audience. Moving the cube triggers dance movements of the AI dancer.

Artists mostly agree that interacting with AI is not about trying to replace the human body but more about integrating it in performances and using the ensuing opportunities. In choreography, at present purely

“

FOR BETTER, OR WORSE, AI CAN CREATE MUSICALS. IT'S UP TO US TO SPY ON OUR DIGITAL COMPETITION, AND DO BETTER THAN IT CAN.”

5 See <https://www.czechuniversities.com/article/the-first-theatre-play-written-by-ai>

6 See <https://www.broadwayworld.com/article/Could-AI-Written-Musicals-Ever-Come-To-Broadway-20230124>

7 See <https://nmi.org/can-ai-write-a-musical/>

8 See <https://www.vox.com/the-highlight/358201/how-does-ai-music-work-benefits-creativity-production-spotify>; <https://revista.unaminternacional.unam.mx/en/nota/6/musica-e-inteligencia-artificial-nuevas-posibilidades-creativas>

9 See <https://www.theguardian.com/stage/2024/oct/29/small-step-or-a-giant-leap-what-ai-means-for-the-dance-world>

AI-generated moves tend to seem rather superficial, so the key lies in wisely integrating them with the artistic expression of the human body.

Other examples of applications are security solutions applied during Taylor Swift concerts from the Reputation Stadium Tour, where facial recognition technology was deployed to spot stalkers.¹⁰

Finally, it can be taken for granted that many performing artists, teams supporting them, or social partner organisations in the sector adopt a range of AI-powered tools to improve various aspects of their work, be it automatic translation, automatically creating podcasts about topics of interest, analysing social media reactions to live performances, and many more.

¹⁰ See https://medium.com/@jeyadev_needhi/the-ai-revolution-in-music-concerts-how-famous-singers-are-using-technology-to-transform-d2105bd74dc4.

1.2. OBSERVATIONS ON THE REGULATORY LANDSCAPE

Reflecting the recency and rapid pace of changes in the area, the regulatory landscape is constantly evolving and remains highly complex. This paper does not attempt to provide a comprehensive assessment. Instead, it shares a few observations of a more general nature that can help to understand the drivers of regulatory action and existing trade-offs. More attention is devoted to the EU AI Act, given its recency (it entered into force in August 2024) and global novelty in terms of a comprehensive attempt to regulate AI.

Given the global impact of developments related to AI, it is not surprising that international efforts began several years ago to agree on certain principles that should guide the emerging regulatory framework. Following a period of discussion that started in the late 2010s, in 2019 the OECD and G20 group of countries adopted the AI Principles, the first intergovernmental standards on AI. The principles were updated in May 2024, and they remain the main reference point for regulatory approaches in key global jurisdictions.

THE OECD PRINCIPLES ARE AS FOLLOWS¹¹:

- Inclusive growth, sustainable development and well-being
- Respect for the rule of law, human rights and democratic values, including fairness and privacy
- Transparency and explainability
- Robustness, security and safety
- Accountability.

Several elements explicitly mentioned under these general headings can be of particular interest to social partners in the sector. The Principles' recitals underline the necessity of a

WELL-INFORMED WHOLE-OF-SOCIETY PUBLIC DEBATE (...) FOR CAPTURING THE BENEFICIAL POTENTIAL OF THE TECHNOLOGY, WHILE LIMITING THE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH IT. THEY FURTHER OBSERVE THAT EXISTING NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEGAL, REGULATORY AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS ALREADY HAVE RELEVANCE TO AI, INCLUDING THOSE RELATED TO (...) PERSONAL DATA PROTECTION, INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS, RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS CONDUCT.

¹¹ OECD (2024), *Revised Recommendation of the Council on Artificial Intelligence*, C/ MIN(2024)16/FINAL, 3 May 2024, <https://www.oecd.org/en/topics/sub-issues/ai-principles.html>

Under the transparency and explainability principle, there is a call for AI actors to provide meaningful information

TO MAKE STAKEHOLDERS AWARE OF THEIR INTERACTIONS WITH AI SYSTEMS AND WHERE FEASIBLE AND USEFUL, TO PROVIDE PLAIN AND EASY-TO-UNDERSTAND INFORMATION ON THE SOURCES OF DATA/INPUT.

Under the accountability principle there is a call that AI actors, should

(...) APPLY A SYSTEMATIC RISK MANAGEMENT APPROACH (...) AND ADOPT RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS CONDUCT TO ADDRESS RISKS RELATED TO AI SYSTEMS, INCLUDING (...) THOSE RELATED TO (...) PRIVACY, AS WELL AS LABOUR AND INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS.

The general principles appear to gather wide support globally, not only among OECD countries, but also e.g. among G20 countries, including China and India that endorsed the Guidelines in June 2019. The references to the principles consistently appear in more recent G20 declarations¹². At the same time, there remain many open questions on the optimal practical approaches that can be adopted to regulate AI. This was well summarised in the title of the article by The Economist from October 2023: *The world wants to regulate AI, but does not quite know how*¹³.

In broad and simplified terms, the challenges are as follows. First, given the global character of AI systems, there remains a strong case for international action. Tightening certain rules in some jurisdictions is of little use if the same does not happen elsewhere. Second, a certain degree of regulatory competition takes place with countries and blocs of countries such as the EU interested in de facto setting global regulatory standards for AI that other jurisdictions would then be likely to follow. Third, there remain trade-offs between stimulating innovation in the area and introducing regulatory checks, which may ban or increase costs of certain actions. Interestingly, the leading AI companies in the OECD world appear to support the emergence of a certain regulatory framework, fearing that without it, a race to the bottom could ensue, leading e.g. to the release of models that can be misused and cause harm. Still, a consensus is lacking on the key risks that the regulation should try to address, what the regulation should target (e.g. models vs. their applications), and how the regulation could be enforced.

“

...THE LEADING AI COMPANIES
IN THE OECD WORLD
APPEAR TO SUPPORT THE
EMERGENCE OF CERTAIN
REGULATORY FRAMEWORK...”

12 See e.g. *One Earth, One Family, One Future*. G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration, New Delhi, India, 9–10 September 2023. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/66739/g20-new-delhi-leaders-declaration.pdf>

13 *The Economist*, *The world wants to regulate AI, but does not quite know how*, 24 October 2023. In the printed edition the article title was *Of evils and evals*.

The approaches to the AI rule making can be presented along different dimensions:

- the extent to which they rely on legislation and regulation
- the extent to which they rely on guidelines
- the extent to which the regulation or guidelines are sector-specific vs. across all sectors.

The EY analysis from late 2023 classified the EU and, to a somewhat lesser extent, Canada and China as places relying more strongly on legislation and regulations compared to the US, UK, Japan or Korea. The EU, US and Japan were places where guidelines were more popular than in the UK, China or Canada¹⁴.

A common element of the approaches in most jurisdictions is linking rulemaking to risks posed by AI. This entails adapting regulations to the risks posed by specific AI-related activities. In this way, regulators hope to strike a balance between mitigating risks while still encouraging development and use of AI¹⁵.

In August 2024 the EU's Artificial Intelligence Act entered into force, following several years of legislative work and negotiations¹⁶. It is currently seen as the most comprehensive binding regulatory attempt globally that covers several aspects of AI systems. Given this uniqueness and novelty, the Act's application in Europe, and the strong interest of the social partners from the live performance sector (see section below), it is worthwhile to devote a few paragraphs to this legislation¹⁷.

In line with the dominant trend discussed above, the AI Act adopts a risk-based approach, where AI systems are classified into several risk categories, and applicable regulation depends on this risk (Figure 1). AI systems falling into the unacceptable risk category are banned. Examples include exploiting vulnerabilities due to age, disability, or social or economic situations, causing significant harm or biometric categorisation systems inferring race, political opinions, trade union membership,

¹⁴ EY (2023), *The Artificial Intelligence (AI) global regulatory landscape* Policy trends and considerations to build confidence in AI.

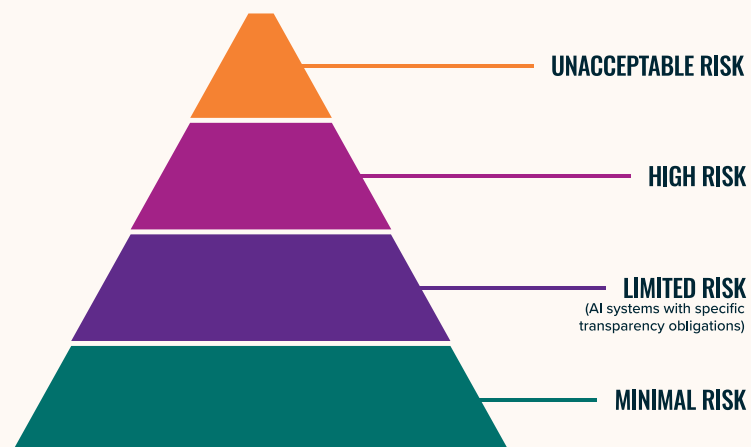
¹⁵ For further discussion see e.g. EU (2023), *The Artificial Intelligence (AI) global regulatory landscape* Policy trends and considerations to build confidence in AI.

¹⁶ Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 laying down harmonised rules on artificial intelligence and amending Regulations (EC) No 300/2008, (EU) No 167/2013, (EU) No 168/2013, (EU) 2018/858, (EU) 2018/1139 and (EU) 2019/2144 and Directives 2014/90/EU, (EU) 2016/797 and (EU) 2020/1828 (Artificial Intelligence Act); [Regulation - EU - 2024/1689 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#).

¹⁷ This short overview draws inter alia from Madiega T. (2024), Artificial intelligence act, Briefing Members' Research Service PE 698.792, [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_BRI\(2021\)698792](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_BRI(2021)698792) and European Commission's materials available at <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/regulatory-framework-ai> and information provided by the <https://artificialintelligenceact.eu/> website.

etc. or AI systems creating or expanding facial recognition databases through untargeted scraping from the internet or CCTV footage.

FIGURE I.1. FOUR LEVELS OF RISK DEFINED IN THE EU AI ACT



Source: extracted from <https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/en/policies/regulatory-framework-ai>

Strict rules will apply to AI systems classified as high risk. Before such products can enter the market, they will require the setting of adequate risk-assessment and mitigation systems. The database feeding them will need to be of high quality, and there are requirements on traceability of results and on ensuring that authorities can access detailed documentation. Examples of systems in this category that may be of interest to social partners include AI technologies used in employment relations such as CV-sorting software for recruitment procedures, digital casting tools or technologies used in the area of educational or vocational training that may determine access to education and professional outcomes (e.g. scoring of exams).

As regards limited-risk systems, an important element introduced by the AI Act is specific transparency requirements for certain AI applications, for example where there is a clear risk of manipulation (e.g. via the use of chatbots) or deepfakes. The objective is to make users aware that they are interacting with a machine. AI systems falling under the minimal-risk category can be developed and used without additional legal obligations of the AI Act.

Of particular interest to the sector's stakeholders are provisions related to generative AI. The regulation introduces a concept of general-pur-

pose AI models (GPAI), i.e. ones that display significant generality and can competently perform a wide range of distinct tasks. This includes popular generative AI models such as DALL-E or ChatGPT. Importantly, all providers of GPAI models, including those that are free and open-license, are obliged to:

- put in place a policy to comply with Union law on copyright and related rights, and in particular to identify and comply with, including through state-of-the-art technologies, a reservation of rights expressed pursuant to Article 4(3) of Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market (2019/790);
- draw up and make publicly available a sufficiently detailed summary about the content used for training of the general-purpose AI model¹⁸.

The rules on GPAI will enter into force in August 2025, one year earlier than full entry into force of the AI Act.

Transparency obligations are also likely to be highly relevant for the live performance sector. In particular, Article 50 of the AI Act requires that deployers of an AI system that generates or manipulates image, audio or video content constituting a deepfake disclose that the content has been artificially generated or manipulated.

The vivid public and political debate on the regulations and their implementation have continued. This includes aspects related to text and data mining activities. In broad terms, the high-level tension exists between safeguarding the interests of content right holders (such as e.g. sound, video and other recordings of live performers) and an objective of ensuring favourable conditions for the advancement of AI systems, also taking into account the global character of the AI market with different approaches to copyrights across jurisdictions¹⁹.

Of particular interest to social partners is the ongoing debate between the EU Member States' governments in the Council's Working Party on Intellectual Property (Copyright). A questionnaire published by the Council Presidency at the end of June 2024 is certainly worth analysing.²⁰ This document is an invitation to a policy dialogue and for the sharing of information, that can potentially lead to future legislative actions, including in areas not currently covered by the law at the EU



HIGH-LEVEL TENSION EXISTS BETWEEN SAFEGUARDING INTERESTS OF CONTENT RIGHT HOLDERS (SUCH AS E.G. SOUND, VIDEO AND OTHER RECORDINGS OF LIVE PERFORMERS) AND AN OBJECTIVE OF ENSURING FAVOURABLE CONDITIONS FOR ADVANCEMENT OF AI SYSTEMS...

¹⁸ Article 53 of the AI Act.

¹⁹ For an example of a recent academic paper analysing the issue of exceptions for text and data mining in the context of AI development and legislative process of the AI Act, see Gina Maria Ziája, The text and data mining opt-out in Article 4(3) CDSMD: *Adequate veto right for rightholders or a suffocating blanket for European artificial intelligence innovations?*, *Journal of Intellectual Property Law & Practice*, Volume 19, Issue 5, May 2024, Pages 453 – 459, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jiplp/jpae025>.

²⁰ Presidency, *Policy questionnaire on the relationship between generative Artificial Intelligence and copyright and related rights*, 27 June 2024, [https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/mpo/2024/7/int-property-copyright-\(345646\)/](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/meetings/mpo/2024/7/int-property-copyright-(345646)/)

level. Examples of the topics covered, and specific questions asked include the following ones:²¹

TRAINING OF AI MODELS

Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market establishes an opt-out system for the general text and data mining exception (Article 4), allowing rightsholders to object to the use of their works or other subject matter protected by copyright and related rights. The AI Act confirms the applicability of the text and data mining exception, including the possibility of the opt-out in the context of AI training. However, some views suggest that this training process cannot always be classified under the right of reproduction, for which such an opt-out can be invoked. There are still open questions regarding the exercise of the opt-out, for instance, in relation to the issue of who has the right to make a valid reservation, what the realistic scope of a valid reservation can be, and what the appropriate technical requirements for a reservation by rightsholders should be.

TRANSPARENCY

Performers might be significantly affected by the use of AI-generated content due to their personality rights (the use of their voice or their entire likeness can be the outcome of the use of such tools). When considering possible additional labelling obligations beyond the ones currently covered in the AI Act, is it necessary to differentiate between various types of works and other subject matter (e.g. audio, visual, audiovisual or textual content) from a watermarking/labelling perspective? Are there specific areas where such labelling (e.g. in the case of performances) would be more justified from a copyright perspective?

REMUNERATION

The process of creation using generative AI may involve the use of works in the training dataset, and the resulting content can compete in the same market as copyrighted works and performances. This phenomenon can, in some cases, negatively impact the legitimate economic interests of authors and other related rightsholders. To avoid such negative impacts, rightsholders may opt out of the text and data mining exception. However, from a practical and legal perspective, the case of material already used for training before the opt-out took place might also be considered, since in general it seems unclear how it can be extracted and removed from the AI training dataset. The copyright-relevant uses carried out by current market-leading AI providers do not, possibly to a major extent, take place in the EU. What measures could



ALLOWING RIGHTSHOLDERS
TO OBJECT TO THE USE
OF THEIR WORKS OR
OTHER SUBJECT MATTER
PROTECTED BY COPYRIGHT
AND RELATED RIGHTS.”

²¹ To make it easier to follow the tone and views of the Council discussions on the subject, the bullets below directly quote (with adaptations) from the policy questionnaire.

be taken at EU level to facilitate the conclusion of licences between rightholders and AI developers? Is there a justified reason to introduce any kind of a specific remuneration regime (possibly in relation to specific sectors or aspects of the generative AI creation process) in the context of generative AI activities?

I.3. SECTORAL SOCIAL PARTNERS' POSITIONS ON AI

During the last two years social partners in the sector, and especially trade union organisations, adopted position papers or issued statements related to the progress in AI tools and its implications for the sector, and especially its workers.

This note analysed in more detail four such statements, three issued during 2023 by the French and UK partners and a more recent one signed by several organisations:

- Declaration of artists of the French Syndicat français des artistes interprètes (French Union of Performing Artists) from May 2023
- Position Paper on Artificial Intelligence by UK Music from June 2023
- AI Vision Statement by Equity, the UK performing arts and entertainment trade union from June 2023, and
- Authors', performers' and other creative workers' organisations joint statement on generative artificial intelligence and the EU AI Act from April 2024

A common theme across these documents is the strong call for protecting creators' rights in the face of AI's rapid advancements, especially generative AI. The artist associations emphasise the need for clear consent mechanisms, fair remuneration and transparency, where copyright-protected works are used as inputs by generative AI. Another shared concern relates to the potential misuse of likenesses, voices, and performances, as seen in Equity's focus on performance cloning and the Syndicat français des artistes interprètes' emphasis on synthetic voices. The protection of this biometric data should fall within the framework of the GDPR, but this is not effectively deployed. The scraping of such data impacts the livelihood of performers and places all people at risk of deepfakes. The call for legal frameworks to protect creators is a recurring theme, with all parties calling for updated regulations that reflect the way in which AI changes artistic creation and, more broadly, AI's growing role in creative industries. The advocacy for transparency in data usage, as well as clear labelling of AI-generated content, is central to these discussions, ensuring that human creativity is not diminished by technology.

While the emphasis of the documents is on risks and associated calls for action, it is clear that the sector is also aware of the positive potential of AI systems. For instance, the UK Music Policy Position Paper emphasises the potential benefits AI brings to the music industry, such as enhanced fan engagement and streamlined administrative processes.

The 2024 joint statement from creative workers' organizations, including UNI MEI – UNI Media, Entertainment and Arts, the International

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THE ADVOCACY FOR
TRANSPARENCY IN DATA
USAGE, AS WELL AS CLEAR
LABELLING OF AI-GENERATED
CONTENT, IS CENTRAL TO
THESE DISCUSSIONS.”

Federation of Actors, and the International Federation of Musicians, focuses on the strengths and weaknesses of the solutions that were incorporated in the EU's AI Act and other relevant legislation. The AI Act was in a draft stage when the statement was issued. The document makes a strong legal argument that the AI Act may not be considered as extending the scope of copyright and related laws' exceptions for text and data mining as defined in Directive (EU) 2019/790 on copyright and related rights in the Digital Single Market to the use of such data in training AI models. At the same time, the statement makes the point that works and personal data of creators have nonetheless been used on a massive scale by the AI industry without any possibility for creators to reserve their rights and be remunerated in return. Hence, while calling for an effective implementation of the AI Act, the statement also urges further work to address legal ambiguities and enshrine transparency, informed consent and remuneration into the legal framework.

I.4. OPPORTUNITIES

This section highlights some of the opportunities that the AI can bring to the live performance sector. As with any new technology, the exact pace of AI implementation and the nature of its impact remain uncertain. Therefore, this list should be viewed not as a definitive catalogue, but as an open invitation for further exploration and innovation within the sector.

AI tools offer opportunities to introduce new features and expand the creative boundaries of live performances. For example, AI can be used to generate innovative lighting designs, stage effects or choreographic suggestions based on audience reactions. As an illustration, AI-powered music composition tools could assist composers and sound designers in crafting complex musical scores tailored to specific emotional cues from the audience. Additionally, AI can create interactive and immersive experiences where digital elements respond immediately to the actions of performers. This could allow artists to experiment with different forms of storytelling, blending human creativity with AI-generated content to produce novel performances.²²

From an employer perspective, there may be a potential to increase productivity within the live performance sector by supplementing human performers with AI-driven avatars or digital characters. Productivity is understood here in economic terms, as a value of production (e.g. as a sum of the value of tickets sold) per performer. Taking live music as an example, and taking a longer historical perspective one can observe that in 18th century, the technological evolution of musical instruments and in particular the introduction of piano had profound impact on live performances. Much louder sound made it possible to perform in front of substantially larger audiences²³. This was hence a large boost to productivity of performers: during one set they could offer their music to a concert hall with a large audience, something that was not possible with a clavichord (it was too quiet to be heard from more than a few metres away), whereas harpsichord could not produce subtle gradations of volume.

For the following two and a half centuries, further changes took place in the sector. The invention of radio and the possibility to record and play music (e.g. CD and more recently online) were major changes affecting the opportunities of musicians. Still, as regards live performances, the situation has not changed that dramatically since

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...A POTENTIAL TO INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY WITHIN THE LIVE PERFORMANCE SECTOR BY SUPPLEMENTING HUMAN PERFORMERS WITH AI-DRIVEN AVATARS OR DIGITAL CHARACTERS.”

22 One example of a project aimed at enhancing music live performance is provided by [NextBeat.AI](https://www.instagram.com/gniewomir_tomczyk_music/?hl=en) by Gniewomir Tomczyk, Polish composer and drummer and Robert Szczytowiec, sound engineer. See https://www.instagram.com/gniewomir_tomczyk_music/?hl=en.

23 Baumol, W. J. and H. Baumol (1994), *On the Economics of Musical Composition in Mozart's Vienna*, *Journal of Cultural Economics* 18: 171-198.

Mozart's times, even if technological progress meant better (and larger) concert halls. One still requires a symphony orchestra gathered for a set period of time in one place to fully experience Beethoven's Fifth symphony live.

It is not yet clear exactly how, or indeed how quickly, it might become feasible for AI technology to offer workable alternatives for certain production elements and even cost-savings. We might imagine scenarios where for example, AI elements, interacting with live performers, could reduce the need for large cast sizes or expensive set designs (or offer backup solutions e.g. in case of an illness of a team member). For example, an AI avatar could serve as a "virtual co-performer," interacting with actors or musicians on stage, enhancing the visual and narrative complexity of the performance. This may help contain rising costs of live performance, making them affordable to a wider audience²⁴. By enhancing production efficiency, AI could expand access to live performances, opening the door for broader participation in arts and culture.

In the more immediate and readily predictable future, there is potential for AI to indirectly support demand for live performances through at least two channels. First, if AI leads to economy-wide productivity gains, disposable incomes could rise, enabling more people to afford and attend live performances. Second, as AI and virtual interactions become more prevalent in everyday life, people may develop a greater appreciation for live, in-person experiences. The contrast between virtual and real-life encounters could boost demand for authentic human interaction, as the emotional resonance of a performance cannot be replicated by technology.

If AI tools lead to substantial improvements in venue and audience planning systems and in sound and light uses, this can also have wider implications. Specifically, this can help optimise costs and improve reach to the intended audience. AI can also help reach specific audience groups and enhance inclusion. It can increase satisfaction with work content, as it allows people to free up time to focus on other, more rewarding, aspects of the job.

From the perspective of social partners' organisations, there is also potential to enhance the productivity and effectiveness of their work. This can relate to streamlining office tasks and reducing some administrative burdens, thereby freeing up staff time for more strategic activities. Additionally, AI-powered data analysis tools can facilitate the review and interpretation of legislative and regulatory proposals, enabling

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ONE STILL REQUIRES A SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA GATHERED FOR A SET PERIOD OF TIME IN ONE PLACE TO FULLY EXPERIENCE BEETHOVEN'S 5TH SYMPHONY LIVE.”

²⁴ Again, the point is not that past large-scale implementations of existing AI tools have necessarily lowered the costs. For example, it took seven years and GBP 175 million to develop the technology and build the arena in east London for concerts of avatars of the Abba rock band that now perform concerts with tickets that in November 2024 ranged from 77 to 159 GBP. The point is rather that particularly fast decline of prices of new technologies is likely to considerably change the economics of AI-supported live performances.

stakeholders to engage in a more impactful way in discussions on and shaping of the policy and regulatory framework that affects the sector. AI can also help overcome language barriers, making international collaboration between social partners easier and more effective, ultimately fostering a more cohesive and responsive global network of industry professionals.

1.5. RISKS

One of key risks of AI in the live performance sector is its potential impact on performers' income from copyright-protected works. As AI-generated content grows, performers might see a decline in royalties and licensing fees that traditionally come from their work. This could result in reduced financial security for artists whose revenue depends heavily on the protection of intellectual property rights.

As often happens with technological changes, AI is likely to lead to shifts in labour demand. Demand for some roles can be expected to decline. This can for example affect certain jobs that performers undertake outside of live performances, such as dubbing, voice recording, and acting for video games. Generative AI, which can replicate human voices and performances, poses a direct threat to these professions. Furthermore, these synthetic performances pose the risk of devaluing human creative work. Additionally, people in certain technical jobs related to live performances, such as sound or lighting design, may require retraining or gaining additional skills. This may put pressure on human professionals in these fields and can reduce certain employment opportunities. The history of past technological transition suggests that this risk will likely be counterbalanced by rising demand for some other roles²⁵. Still, the transition can be difficult for groups of workers lowering their real wages as also evidenced by historical evidence.²⁶ A related risk applies to certain skills in the sector. Shifting demand for skills will likely imply that specific skills will become less often needed and hence may become scarcer with ensuing implications for the whole sector.

The manipulation of performers' likenesses through deepfakes creates serious risks. The AI-generated images, videos, or audio clips can misrepresent artists in damaging ways. Performers, especially those who record audio or video content, are particularly vulnerable due to the easy access to the data that can be misused. The misuse of likeness or voice can harm performers' reputation and directly impact their employment opportunities and income.

Another potential issue with widening of the use of AI-based solutions is homogenization of audience preferences. Increased exposure

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GENERATIVE AI, WHICH CAN REPLICATE HUMAN VOICES AND PERFORMANCES, POSES A DIRECT THREAT TO THESE PROFESSIONS.”

²⁵ Examples often cited in literature include an increase the shifts in bank employment following popularisation of cash dispensers (ATMs), where employment increased due to rise in the number of branches and higher employment of people focusing on customer relations (see e.g. <https://futuresofwork.co.uk/2022/11/29/technologys-impact-on-the-labour-market-different-this-time/>).

²⁶ One example is the fate of previously well paid artisan cotton weavers during the early years of the industrial revolution (1800s and 1810s) after their jobs were largely replaced by newly invented machines (see e.g. Acemoglu, D. and S. Johnson (2024), *Learning from Ricardo and Thompson: Machinery and Labor in the Early Industrial Revolution, and in the Age of AI*, NBER Working Paper 32416.).

to AI production that is tailored to needs and that draws from existing patterns in algorithmic ways may ultimately diminish the diversity and richness of cultural expressions. Over time, this could lead to a narrowing variety of artistic tastes, reducing the audience's openness to more experimental or unique live performances. Such a shift could result in the devaluation of live cultural experiences, as audiences may begin to prefer easily accessible, AI-generated content over the authenticity of human performances.

While the historical evidence shows that technological advancements like radio, television, and Internet streaming have not reduced the demand for live performances, there remains uncertainty about how increasingly easier access to AI-generated content might influence future audience behaviour. If AI becomes better at replicating or simulating live performances, there is a potential risk that audiences could become less interested in attending live events.

Finally, a risk that is not strictly linked to applications in the live performance sector, but a broader issue with AI relates to energy intensity of the underlying technology. As environmental concerns intensify, the energy-intensive nature of AI raises serious questions about the sustainability of its widespread adoption, including in the live performance industry.



AS ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS INTENSIFY, THE ENERGY-INTENSIVE NATURE OF AI RAISES SERIOUS QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SUSTAINABILITY OF ITS WIDESPREAD ADOPTION, INCLUDING IN THE LIVE PERFORMANCE INDUSTRY.”

I.6. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

One area that has always been important for the sector is the evolution of audience preferences. Education, access to technologies, most recently including AI tools, and other socio-economic developments all play a role here. While it remains uncertain how exactly the advances in AI will shape the audience in the future, the sector clearly has a role to play in reaching out to new potential spectators, including in groups that have historically been less represented in concert, theatre and other venues. There is also room for cross-sectoral initiatives, given the live performance potential to foster emotional and social connections in the societies.

THE AI-ENABLED TECHNOLOGIES and tools are here to stay. Their potential to reshape the live performance sector is significant, though its full extent remains unclear. Experiments with AI are happening across all areas of the live performance business. The technology's ongoing development presents both risks and opportunities for performers, social partners, and other stakeholders. It is thus crucial for social partners to stay informed and actively engage in public debate on regulatory and technological developments. This will require investing adequate resources in acquiring and updating the knowledge base and skills in this rapidly changing area. Still, this appears the best way for the social partners to remain highly relevant for the sector's stakeholders and to be able to protect the interests of workers and employers.

The impact of AI on the sector can be significant, and those who remain proactive will be better positioned to navigate this rapidly evolving landscape.

GIVEN THE COMPLEXITY of AI-related developments, it is essential for social partners to collaborate and share resources. By pooling knowledge and expertise, stakeholders gain better chances to remain abreast of developments and to better understand emerging risks and opportunities. Cooperation would also strengthen social partners' ability to effectively represent the sector's needs in negotiations and policy discussions.

ENGAGING WITH GOVERNMENTS, research centres, big tech companies, and audiences is crucial for shaping the future of AI's role in live performance. It is important to realise that other players, such as governments are open to constructive dialogue and advice, themselves feeling pressure to maximise opportunities and limit the risks related to the new technology. Ongoing policy debates, such as those surrounding the EU's AI Act, and the example of Council's Working Party on Intellectual Property

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IT IS THUS CRUCIAL FOR SOCIAL PARTNERS TO STAY INFORMED AND ACTIVELY ENGAGE IN PUBLIC DEBATE ON REGULATORY AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS.”

(Copyright) questionnaire discussed earlier in this report provide good examples. There appears to be room for and interest in well-argued, realistic proposals of social partners. The dialogue with governments and other stakeholders may make it possible to develop and adopt new solutions.

COPYRIGHT ISSUES AS well as personal and biometric data protection are clearly one of the key areas of focus for the sector. The way in which AI-generated content uses existing performances and the output of generative AI tools challenge traditional notions of intellectual property. Carefully considering the nuances and trade-offs in this area will be key for social partners to develop practical and constructive proposals that can balance the protection of performers' rights with technological innovation. Solutions that are well thought-out and realistic are more likely to gain traction in policy circles and be implemented effectively.

LASTLY, THE OPPORTUNITIES presented by AI should not be overlooked. Social partners can harness new tools to improve the way they operate as organisations, from enhancing internal workflows to fostering effective engagement with stakeholders and easier co-operating across borders. The fusion of artistic creativity with advanced technology opens new possibilities for live performances. This intersection could lead to groundbreaking experiences and exciting artistic explorations and may allow the sector to evolve in dynamic ways, while preserving the unique value of human expression.

CHAPTER II.

“THE SHOW MUST GO ON” SAFELY – HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE LIVE PERFORMANCE SECTOR



II.1. HEALTH AND SAFETY CHALLENGES AND RISKS IN THE LIVE PERFORMANCE SECTOR

A range of diverse health and safety risks are associated with live performances. Some are related to the fact that potentially large audiences gather in limited spaces, while other ones relate to the character of the work by performers or support staff. The current paper does not aim to provide a systematic presentation of the risks. It is still instructive to discuss certain examples illustrating the variety of health- and safety-related challenges.

Risks related to preparing a live event range from the risk of fire to the risk of injury in the crowd, e.g. near exits. ‘Every event has its own set of risk factors and considerations,’ says Eddy Grant CMIOSH, director of safety at Symphotech. ‘You’re creating a standalone experience and, for that to be successful, it needs its own well-researched, properly formulated and effective safety plan.’²⁷ Each event may have a unique set of risks due to the fact that crew sizes vary, type of audience may vary or the performance has some specificity. This complexity calls for a tailored risk assessment as generic one may turn out insufficient.

II.1.1 EVENT AND VENUE-RELATED RISKS

Crowd management is one of the challenges and this involves design features of facilities where large live events take place. Lack of planning and mitigation measures may lead to serious accidents. One example is provided by the December 2022 incident during the concert at O2 Academy Brixton in London. The incident resulted in the deaths of two people and was caused by a large number of fans trying to force entry into the venue without tickets, leading to overcrowding and chaos at the entrance. As a result, the venue’s license was suspended. It has reopened two years later after introducing improvements such as reinforced doors, enhanced queuing systems, and stricter ticketing procedures.²⁸

While new technologies offer significant opportunities for enhancing

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EVERY EVENT HAS ITS OWN SET OF RISK FACTORS AND CONSIDERATIONS.”

²⁷ IOSH Magazine <https://www.ioshmagazine.com/2023/05/03/new-challenges-event-safety>.

²⁸ BBC, *Brixton Academy to reopen more than a year after fatal crush*, <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-london-68467231>.

live performance experiences and audience engagement, they also introduce risks. Increasing digital interaction with audiences increases the vulnerability of venues and individuals to data breaches and cyber-attacks aimed at stealing personal or sensitive information. Additionally, the widespread use of social media platforms presents reputational risks for performers, staff, and venue operators, particularly when individuals are publicly associated with specific events, roles, or artistic content. In extreme cases, such online exposure can lead to harassment, abuse, and long-term reputational or psychological harm.

Another safety challenge in the industry is related to the often-demanding working hours schedules (including night shifts) at live performance venues. This may lead to fatigue of both the performers and support staff members increasing the likelihood of injuries and accidents. Exposure to stage lights for a prolonged time may pose a risk of heat stress. This risk may also be linked to the severe weather conditions like very high temperatures, sudden storms and other. Experts on crowd safety agree that rigorous contingency plans are a must in case an event has to be postponed, cancelled, interrupted or evacuated due to the weather.²⁹

II.1.2. OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH RISKS FOR PERFORMERS AND CREW

People working in the live performance sector may be exposed to various hazards, including working at heights, loud noise exposure, potential injuries from equipment, and use of harmful chemicals (such as adhesives, paints, cosmetics, or pyrotechnics). Risks are also linked to poorly maintained venues (e.g., dust, mould, and fungi). While awareness is important, it often is not enough to ensure protection – some organizers or venue owners may prioritize cost savings over safety and holding them accountable can be difficult and time-consuming. In the case of loud noise exposure, addressing the risk goes beyond financial investment. It also requires a shift in behaviour and culture, including quieter performances, scheduled breaks, thoughtful stage layouts and willingness from promoters, musicians and audiences to adapt. In short, designing shows with noise reduction in mind is essential, and not solely a question of resources.

Equally concerning is the high level of stress caused by performance-related injuries such as hearing loss, musculoskeletal disorders, or focal dystonia. Many performers fear that disclosing first signs of such issues could jeopardize their careers, leading them to hide symptoms and postpone treatment rather than seek help. This issue is deeply rooted in a professional culture where physical pain is often normalized,

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WHILE AWARENESS IS
IMPORTANT, IT OFTEN
ISN'T ENOUGH TO ENSURE
PROTECTION...”

²⁹ Too hot to party? Extreme temperatures threaten live music shows
<https://www.eco-business.com/news/too-hot-to-party-extreme-temperatures-threaten-live-music-shows/>.

especially among dancers and musicians who are traditionally trained to endure discomfort as part of the job.

Late working hours and night shifts also pose psychosocial and physical health risks for performers, technical crews, and venue staff. Staff shortages can lead to long overtime, fatigue, and insufficient recovery periods. Many workers experience fragmented sleep and chronic exhaustion, especially when juggling multiple jobs. These challenges are more acute for older workers and for physically demanding or public-facing roles, such as stagehands, technicians, and touring performers. In addition, social isolation, disrupted relationships, and poor diet or exercise routines can intensify health impacts. Theatre workers (especially women) also report safety concerns related to commuting late at night.³⁰

Climate change poses new risks to individuals working in the sector. There are no precise data on how many live performance events are disrupted or cancelled due to extreme weather conditions that have become increasingly common in recent years. Still, anecdotal evidence suggests that the numbers have been growing. The real impact is yet hard to estimate and it is clear that not only outdoor events are affected and that it may also have an impact on individual mental well-being.

II.1.3. SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND SEXIST BEHAVIORS

Sexual harassment remains a significant threat to health and safety in the live performance sector. Reports and research studies highlight that these behaviors are often normalized within the industry, creating a culture where abuse is often tolerated, underreported, and not sufficiently addressed.³¹ The nature of live performance work and its unique characteristics such as late-night hours, informal environments, crowd density, impulsive behaviors often because of alcohol or drug abuse, increase the risk of harassment and create specific vulnerabilities. On top of that many performers, stage technicians, and other staff members are engaged on a freelance or short-term basis, which can discourage reporting out of fear of retaliation or loss of future work opportunities. In some cases, blurred professional boundaries and the intimate context of artistic collaboration may also be exploited. These risks may lead to feelings of fear and powerlessness and may result in avoidance of certain situations, people, or venues. The psychological impacts can be long-lasting, affecting mental health, well-being, and career. Such risks



REPORTS AND RESEARCH STUDIES HIGHLIGHT THAT THESE BEHAVIORS ARE OFTEN NORMALIZED WITHIN THE INDUSTRY...”

30 Moore, S., & Ballardie, R. (2024). *The health and safety impacts of night working*. Anglia Ruskin University & University of Greenwich <https://www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/reports/health-and-safety-impacts-night-working>.

31 This is elaborated for example in the report *Gender discrimination in the music industry compels action* a report from European Composer's and Songwriters Alliance (ECSA, 2024) and in the ILO *Policy Brief on sexual harassment in the entertainment industry* (ILO, 2020)

not only undermine individual safety and mental health but also restrict equal participation and enjoyment in the live performance sector. Addressing this issue requires both preventive and responsive measures, including robust reporting systems, sector-wide codes of conduct, and accessible support mechanisms for those affected.

II.1.4. RISKS LINKED TO ARTISTIC CONTENT AND FREEDOM OF ARTISTIC EXPRESSION

Another layer of the health and safety challenges may be linked to the artistic content of the shows. An incident in Stuttgart Opera has shown that even explicit warnings before the show that it contains shocking scenes may not be enough to keep audiences safe. In October 2024 in the Stuttgart Opera about 18 people sought medical assistance due to the severe nausea caused by watching the performance *Sancta Susanna* by Florentina Holzinger. The provocative production included elements such as live body piercing, unsimulated sexual acts, and a mix of real and fake blood. These visuals, combined with the absence of a break during the nearly three hour show, reportedly overwhelmed some attendees.

The content of the show may not only do harm to the audience but may also disturb the outside world or even pose a threat to performers. This risk can materialise e.g. when the content of the show hurts someone's religious or other feelings leading to protests that can become violent. The performers themselves may also be targeted by such protests, with ensuing psychological burden or in extreme cases also risks to physical safety. For example, both artists and audiences were put at risk many times across the US and other countries on the occasion of performing and/or attending the show based on *The Vagina Monologues* by Eve Ensler.

Risks may also appear where the theatre (or any other art) tries to confront authoritarian power of the state that can provoke state retaliation, thus placing both the artists and audience of such events in position of real vulnerability.³²

II.1.5 TIME PRESSURE AND ITS COST

Time pressure in the live performance sector is a serious safety and well being risk. This was illustrated by an incident during an opera rehearsal at a theatre in France. The performance required singers to fall into a water tank during the final choir scene. During earlier rehearsals the water was too cold and the singers requested it to be properly

³² For example, the Belarus Free Theatre (BFT) was an underground theatre group that used performance as a form of political resistance against the authoritarian regime in Belarus. The group operated under constant threat of persecution making its performances dangerous for both artists and audiences. In 2021, members of the group were forced to leave the country. <https://belarusfreetheatre.com/our-story>

warmed. It was winter and they were concerned about becoming ill. On the day of the premiere, due to time constraints, the director insisted on conducting one final rehearsal instead of allowing sufficient time for a proper technical run through. When the singers fell into the tank during this rehearsal, they were surprised to find that the water had been overheated. While most of the performers quickly stood up and exited the tank, one singer remained compliant with the staging instructions and later suffered from severe scald burns, requiring hospitalization. This situation shows how production timelines and performance demands can sometimes overrule common sense safety considerations and lead to preventable harm. It is clear that time pressure is one of the risks increasingly affecting the live performance industry. The demand for rapid production and frequent touring is intensifying, affecting all professions across the industry. Individuals are expected to deliver high quality results within extremely tight timelines. Touring schedules are often unrealistic, leaving little room for rest, proper stage setup, long enough rehearsal periods, and adequate planning. This undoubtedly increases the likelihood of vocal strain, burnout, or mental health breakdowns. Young artists at the start of their careers are particularly vulnerable. They frequently have to choose between taking on roles to build their reputation or stepping back for essential reasons like sick leave or maternity leave. People are often afraid of doing this because they are worried that it could jeopardise future opportunities.

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THE DEMAND FOR RAPID PRODUCTION AND FREQUENT TOURING IS INTENSIFYING, AFFECTING ALL PROFESSIONS ACROSS THE INDUSTRY.”

II.1.6 AUDIENCE BEHAVIOUR AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Both audience and the venue staff may feel unsafe when being exposed to antisocial behaviour by a person or a group of people participating in a cultural event. One example of such behaviour is from a performance at the Manchester’s Palace Theatre where the show had to be disrupted as some people in the audience started singing loudly and refused to remain seated. The situation escalated to the point where security had to intervene to remove several individuals from the theatre. Incidents of this type illustrate the challenges theatres face in managing audience behaviour and ensuring a safe environment for both performers and attendees. According to a survey done in the UK by BECTU, a union representing workers in the media and entertainment industries, this incident reflects a broader trend of increasing antisocial behaviour in theatres, with incidents of physical aggression and verbal abuse. The BECTU survey found that nearly 80 percent of respondents had experienced acts of bullying, violence, intimidation, harassment, or abuse of staff.³³ Reports suggest

33 Audience Behaviours in UK Theatrical Venues. Summary findings of a Bectu survey, February 2023 https://union.bectu.org.uk/asset/A50B1943%2D6FD6%2D46E3%2D934C92AB4597F12D/?gl=1*16zf8ji*_up*MQ.*_ga*MTg2MjcyNTczOS4xNzY1MjA3Njgy*_ga_VP411701CT*cZ3NjUyMDc2ODEkbzEkZzEkdDE3NjUyMDc3NzUkajYwJGwwJGgw.

that many theatre staff fear for their safety due to such behaviours, prompting calls for stricter enforcement of audience conduct policies.

II.1.7 PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL STRAIN FOR OLDER WORKERS

“Getting older is an unforeseen event in the music industry” said Rosana Corbacho, a psychologist. She notes that stepping away from the stage can feel akin to losing one’s identity, as artists’ self-worth is often closely tied to an artistic career.³⁴ For many, performing is not just a job but an integral part of who they are. However, older performers and support staff often face challenges related to their age. The industry often prioritizes young performers, which may create a barrier for older artists despite their experience and talent. Mainstream opportunities (stable employment, new lucrative contracts) often diminish with age, forcing many to rely on ad hoc gigs for income due to the lack of retirement planning or financial security within the industry. Additionally, touring increases physical vulnerabilities, with older artists more frequently suffering from fatigue, injuries, and other health complications during extended tours.

Support staff also face systemic issues. The post-pandemic recovery has led to a shortage of skilled workers in technical roles, such as production and sound engineering, as many left the sector for more stable careers. This has resulted in overworked staff and difficulty recruiting new talent, particularly during high-demand periods like festival seasons.

To address those challenges, the audience has an important role to play. The stereotypes related to age e.g. that creativity performance ability declines with age, that older people should not attend performances of a young pop star or should not engage in pop music gigs, should be challenged, as older performers often bring decades of experience, emotional depth, and mastery to their art.

II.1.8 MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHOSOCIAL CHALLENGES

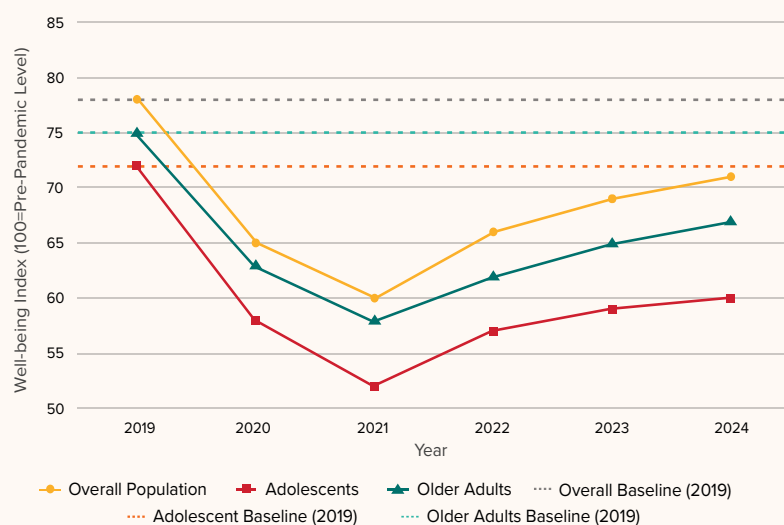
Mental health and well being seem to be currently among the main challenges for people in Europe. A worsening of the situation can be observed in the last few years. Initially it was triggered by the COVID pandemic. While all age groups have been affected, the data indicates that young people have emerged as one of the most vulnerable populations.

80%

HAD EXPERIENCED “ACTS OF BULLYING, VIOLENCE, INTIMIDATION, HARASSMENT, OR ABUSE OF STAFF”.

³⁴ Old rockers and the retirement dilemma: *Getting older is an unforeseen event in the music industry* <https://english.elpais.com/culture/2025-03-15/old-rockers-and-the-retirement-dilemma-getting-older-is-an-unforeseen-event-in-the-music-industry.html>

FIGURE 1. MENTAL WELL-BEING TRENDS BY AGE GROUP IN OECD/EU COUNTRIES



Source: *Health at a Glance*, OECD 2024

According to recent findings from the OECD’s *Health at a Glance 2024*, adolescent mental health has worsened more than that of the general population. By 2024, mental well-being levels among the youth remained markedly below pre-pandemic benchmarks. As older populations begin to recover, adolescents are struggling to regain emotional stability, hindered by post pandemic problems (a period of social isolation, educational disruption, digital overload), climate change, geopolitical tensions, and potentially some other factors.

The live performance sector is a workspace for many young people and a sector that connects with youth audiences. Some individuals enter the industry in their early adulthood or even earlier, combining it with education. The pressures specific to the sector such as irregular working hours, performance pressure, and competitiveness can exacerbate mental health vulnerabilities.

The sector specific literature review commissioned by Equity and the Musicians Union reveals problematic mental health trends in the live performing sector.³⁵ Two studies covered by that review reported depression prevalence to be twice as likely among performers, actors and ballet dancers than among the general population.³⁶ The review also suggests that people working in the industry may be more prone

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...IRREGULAR WORKING HOURS, PERFORMANCE PRESSURE, COMPETITIVENESS CAN EXACERBATE MENTAL HEALTH VULNERABILITIES.”

35 Moore, S., Ballardie, R., and Green, D. *Global Scoping Review of Factors Related to Poor Mental Health and Wellbeing within the Performing Arts Sector*. Equity UK 2022.

36 Maxwell, I., Seton, M., & Szabo, M. (2015). *The Australian actors’ wellbeing study: A preliminary report*. In *About Performance* (No. 13, pp. 69-113). Ravaldi, C., Vannacci, A., Zucchi, T., Mannucci, E., Cabras, P. L., Boldrini, M., ... & Ricca, V. (2003). *Eating disorders and body image disturbances among ballet dancers, gymnasium users and body builders*. *Psychopathology*, 36(5), 247-254.

to experiencing anxiety because of stress resulting from competition with and comparison to other artists, struggling for perfection, and/or dissatisfaction with performance.

Other factors may contribute to this situation:

- Irregular working hours, extended periods away from home, and financial insecurity were the most frequently discussed sources of stress and mental health concerns among performing artists,
- Numerous studies highlighted job instability, including unpredictable and short-term employment, low wages and workload imbalances,
- Other research papers found that stressful work environments were linked to negative relationships with those in positions of power, particularly when they were indifferent, unsupportive, or authoritarian,
- Studies also suggested that education institutions offer insufficient support, leaving students largely unprepared for managing their psychological well-being once they enter the labour market.

Mental health of both performers and crew members is often challenged by intense touring. At first it may look fabulous and exciting but often it is linked to long traveling, sleep deprivation, pressure of delivering perfection during the show, long periods away from home and loved ones and last-minute changes in the schedules. All this can lead to physical exhaustion, increasing stress and weakening mental well-being. In some cases, it may result in anxiety, depression and substance abuse. The 2020 study among North American touring professionals found some 50% of survey participants at high risk for clinical depression.³⁷

Exploring mental health in relation to ethnically diverse performers, performers with disabilities³⁸, and their social class remains a challenge. It is possible that some groups of performers may face particular challenges. This is to some extent reflected in the report *Musicians Census Mental Wellbeing Report 2023*.³⁹ This report focuses on the situation of musicians in the UK but the findings may to some extent be extrapolated for EU countries. The reports' main findings include:

- Although there is no substantial difference in reporting low mental wellbeing between musicians from Global Majority backgrounds

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ALL THIS CAN LEAD TO PHYSICAL EXHAUSTION, INCREASING STRESS AND WEAKENING MENTAL WELL-BEING.”

37 Newman C, George RP, Beitz T, Bergson Z, Zemon V. (2022), *Mental health issues among international touring professionals in the music industry*. J Psychiatr Res., Vol 145, pp. Pages 243 – 249, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpsychires.2021.12.031>.

38 More info on knowledge gaps for disabled artists and audiences can be find in the report *On the Move – Time to Act: Two Years On* (British Council, 2023). <https://disabilityarts.online/resources/research-and-learning/research-and-reports/on-the-move-time-to-act-two-years-on-2023/>.

39 Help Musicians & Musicians' Union (2023) *Musicians' Census Mental Wellbeing Report*. Available at: www.helpmusicians.org.uk.

and musicians from white backgrounds, lack of representation of ethnically diverse individuals in the industry may contribute to mental health struggles and create some structural barriers such as limited access to opportunities, financial instability, and exclusion from mainstream networks. Ethnic minority musicians who also identify as LGBTQ+ or have disabilities may face compounded challenges leading to even lower mental wellbeing.

- Some 49% of the surveyed musicians with disabilities reported low mental wellbeing, a 2.5 times higher share than for musicians without disabilities (20%). Similarly, 66% neurodiverse musicians reported low mental wellbeing and mental health conditions affects another 54%. Musicians often indicate that the stigma surrounding disabilities, lack of accessibility in music venues, and stressful work environments (especially on tour) contribute to worsening mental health. There are also certain barriers for performers with low-income socioeconomic background to the entry into the industry and to the career progression.
- Income levels seem to correlate strongly with mental well-being. Low-income musicians were twice as likely to experience poor mental health compared to musicians with high earnings.

On the other hand, live performance also has a unique role to play in addressing the youth mental health crisis. As a mode of expression and connection, theatre, music, dance, and interdisciplinary arts can offer young people tools to process their emotions, build resilience, and regain a sense of community. For audiences, attending live performances can be a healing and socially restorative experience. For performers, creative engagement – when supported in a safe and inclusive environment – can foster confidence, identity development, and peer connection.

For audiences, attending performances can be emotionally healing and socially restorative. Live music elicits stronger and more consistent activity in the human brain than recorded music by driving stronger emotional responses.⁴⁰ There is growing interest in studying the therapeutic force of music, with some authors observing that “regularly experiencing live music is the key to building a long standing improvement to wellbeing.”⁴¹

Music holds profound therapeutic potential also for performers, especially when supported by inclusive and safe environments. Creative

49%

OF THE SURVEYED MUSICIANS
WITH DISABILITIES REPORTED
LOW MENTAL WELLBEING.

40 *Live Music's Unique Spark: A Brain's Emotional Journey*, February 26, 2024
<https://neurosciencenews.com/live-music-emotion-25665/>.

41 Quotation of Patrick Fagan, an expert in behavioral science and lecturer at Goldsmiths, University of London. <https://www.newsweek.com/going-concerts-can-help-you-live-longer-according-new-study-863628>.

engagement can foster resilience, confidence, and community belonging. It is not only a form of artistic expression but also a mechanism for emotional self regulation. Performing live offers a unique environment where stress can be transformed into energy, allowing artists to meaningfully connect with audiences and derive emotional fulfillment from the act of performing⁴². Scientific research stresses music's capacity to reduce stress hormones, increase endorphins, and foster social connection. For performers, this manifests in both emotional relief and enhanced mental resilience. Musical engagement stimulates brain activity more intensely than verbal communication, creating a powerful platform for emotional expression that is particularly valuable for those navigating the high pressure demands of performance careers.

Music can serve as a therapeutic tool during times of personal or professional strain. Artists often report that live performance allows them to process complex emotions, find identity, and regain a sense of control. When facilitated in inclusive, empathetic environments, music can thus become a source of healing rather than stress.

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REGULARLY EXPERIENCING
LIVE MUSIC IS THE KEY TO
BUILDING A LONG-STANDING
IMPROVEMENT TO WELLBEING.”

42 Live Music Industry and Mental Health: How Music Venues Can Show Support
<https://prism.fm/blog/insights/live-music-industry-and-mental-health-how-music-venues-can-show-support/>

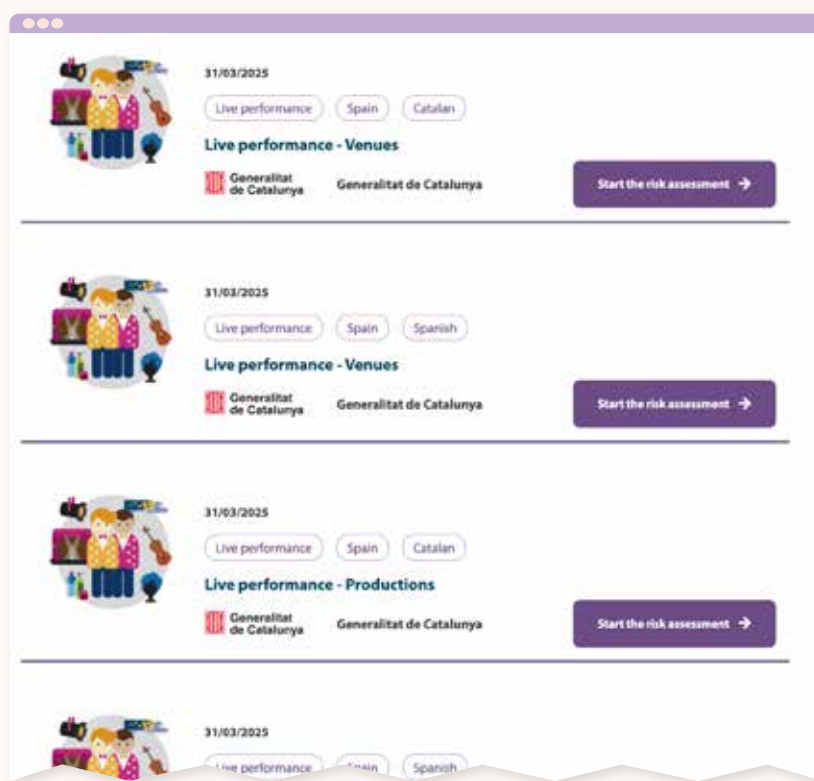
II.2. EXAMPLES OF INITIATIVES IN THE SECTOR

Social partners across Europe are aware of the health and safety challenges in the live performance sector, though levels of engagement and action vary across countries. While specific national initiatives may be different, the awareness and efforts to address these challenges are often influenced by broader European frameworks and social dialogue processes. At the EU level, social dialogue creates a platform for negotiation, development of standards, and for work to influence policy on employment, working conditions, health and safety, and professional development. The Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for the Live Performance Sector has been discussing the importance of improving health and safety in the sector and has been implementing joint research and actions on the topic for over 20 years. This chapter covers selected examples of the recent initiatives of this type.

II.2.1. INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS

One important initiative is the OIRA tool Online Interactive Risk assessment. These are occupational health and safety tools designed for assessing risks of accidents and work related diseases in the workplace. They have been developed by the European Agency for Health and Safety at Work EU OSHA in cooperation with European social partners. These tools enable venues and productions in the live performance sector to identify and manage risks associated with various activities, including technical elements like set design, rigging, special effects, and audience interactions. They can help prevent accidents in diverse performance environments. The tools cover a wide range of risks, including hazards related to staging and equipment, risks from chemical substances, noise exposure levels, and safety considerations for some specific scenes that require some specific skills.

FIGURE II.2. EXAMPLES OF OIRA TEST TOOLS INTERFACE FOR THE LIVE PERFORMANCE SECTOR



Source: Online Interactive Risk Assessment, <https://oira.osha.europa.eu/en/oira-tools>

In 2023, 27 new OiRA tools were developed widening the resources available to stakeholders in other sectors. The tools are available in many EU languages, making them accessible to diverse stakeholders within the sector. In 2023, more than 367,000 risk assessments were completed with the use of these tools.⁴³

For the OiRA tools the EU OSHA also partners with national authorities (ministries and labour inspectorates) and national occupational health and safety institutes that have decided to join the OiRA community. In some cases, this leads to creating national resources inspired by OiRA tools. Examples of this approach can be found in Belgium, Finland, and Greece.⁴⁴

Another example of a joint initiative is *The European Safety Passport* for the live performance sector. It was developed through a collaboration of organisations such as:

⁴³ <https://osha.europa.eu/en/oshnews/discover-oira-facts-2023-27-new-tools-and-more-86-000-risk-assessments>.

⁴⁴ A Finish version of the OiRA tool could be found at <https://www.ttl.fi/hyvinvoiva-pienyritys/pienyrityksen-tyoturvallisuus/oira-riskien-arvioinnin-verkkotyokalu-mikro-pienyrityksille/>.

- *Sociaal Fonds Podiumkunsten* (Belgium)
- *Die Deutsche Theatertechnische Gesellschaft, DTHG* (Germany)
- *Vereniging voor Podiumtechnologie, VPT* (Netherlands)
- *Svensk Teaterteknisk Förening, STTF* (Sweden)
- *Royal Institute for Theatre, Cinema and Sound, RITCS* (Belgium),
- *Professional association of producers, designers and technicians of the arts and event sector, STEPP* (Belgium)
- *Metropolia University of Applied Sciences Helsinki* (Finland)

The European Safety Passport is a qualification connected with a training course designed for professionals in the live performing sector. To obtain the Safety Passport, candidates must complete a three-step process: online learning, written exam and a practical assessment. The Safety Passport is recognized across Europe by the respective organisations involved in the initiative and serves as a certification of the commitment to and skills related to the safety standards in the live performing sector.

Besides those, many national social partners provide a tailored health and safety guidance for professionals in the live performance sector.

II.2.2 NATIONAL INITIATIVES

ARBOPODIUM, a Dutch foundation, promotes healthy and safe working conditions in the live performance sector. It implements two key Initiatives:

PODIUMRIE: A sector-specific Risk Inventory & Evaluation (RI&E) instrument designed for the sector and recognized by the Dutch Labour Inspectorate as the current safety standard.

ARBOCATALOGUS: Comprehensive guides that provide solutions and best practices for addressing various occupational risks within the performing arts sector. These catalogues cover topics such as physical strain, working at heights, and the use of hazardous substances.

THALIE SANTÉ is a French health and safety service dedicated to professionals in the cultural and creative industries offering specialised support to sectors such as media, advertising, communication, performing arts, and audiovisual production. The institution was established in 2021 by merging the Centre Médical Bourse (CMB) and the Centre Médical de la Publicité et de la Communication (CMPC).

Thalie Santé offers support both for individuals working in the industry (regardless from their employment status) and for employers. Workers can access regular occupational medical examinations and health assessments, mental support and sessions with psychologists, consultations on health concerns related to work and prevention programs mitigating risks related to stress, fatigue, and physical strain.

Employers can reach out for advice on how to meet legal obligations under French occupational laws, and can obtain help in risk assessments, in particular in developing a risk inventory **DOCUMENT UNIQUE D'EVALUATION des RISQUES**, and assistance with designing and implementing safety strategies. Employers can also access trainings, tools, and guidance to prevent workplace accidents.

In Denmark there is **PARTNERSHIP FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN MUSIC**,⁴⁵ an industry alliance of more than 90 companies, organisations, and institutions from across the Danish music ecosystem. They work together towards a more sustainable development of music industry by calling to ensure equal access for all talents, health and wellbeing on and behind the stage, and to support a greener and more sustainable music scene. What seems innovative about this initiative is that it combines health & safety, mental wellbeing and climate change challenges and tries to address those in a comprehensive way.

The **BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR PERFORMING ARTS MEDICINE (BAPAM)**, a charity, delivers expert health and wellbeing services for the UK's entire performing arts sector, supporting industry professionals and students, from musicians and singers to dancers, actors, and circus performers as well as those who work behind the scenes. BAPAM provides information and training to prevent poor health as well as specialist care when things go wrong. BAPAM was established in 1984 and since then has helped thousands of artists and creators each year.

The Musicians Union, a UK-based trade union, offers resources on risk assessments, and mental health support, addressing unique challenges facing performers.⁴⁶

For preventing sexual harassment and sexist behaviours and dealing with it, there is a big variety of national initiatives ranging from collective agreements like in France⁴⁷ through codes of conduct, pledges, tool-kits, training and mentoring programmes, and victim support schemes. Good practices in this field have been collected by European social partners within a project *Gender Equality on and off the stage*.⁴⁸

Prioritising health and safety in the live performance sector is not just about preventing accidents. The key aspects also include workers' well-being, legal compliance, financial stability, and there are strong links with the overall success of the industry. As the sector continues

45 More info can be found here: <https://partnershipforsustainablemusic.com/>

46 More information: <https://musiciansunion.org.uk/health-safety-wellbeing/health-and-safety>.

47 National collective agreement Lutte contre les Violences et le Harcèlement Sexiste et Sexuel (VHSS) au travail.
https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/conv_coll/id/KALITEXT000049095162/?idConteneur=KALICONT000028157262&origin=list.

48 Database of the Gender Equality Good Practices can be found here: <https://gender-equality-onandoffstage.eu/en/database.php>.

to evolve, investing in better working conditions and innovative safety solutions will be key to its resilience and growth.

As mentioned above over the recent years mental well-being of the individuals active in the sector receives more and more attention.

II.2.3 MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING INITIATIVES

- There are many European and national initiatives targeting improving mental wellbeing and preventing mental wellbeing deterioration for the general public.⁴⁹ It is important as they sensitize society and contribute to creating a supportive environment. They also encourage open discussion, enable early intervention and better management of mental health challenges. Such campaigns help reduce stigma associated with mental health issues and encourage individuals to seek help without fear of judgment.
- Individuals working in the live performance sector are often offered support schemes designed specifically for the sector. This is true for countries where initiatives mentioned above like ArboPodium, Thalie Santé and BAPAM are already in place. In many European countries social partners are supported by NGOs. An example of such an initiative is Stichting Sociale Veiligheid Podiumkunsten (Foundation for Social Safety in the Performing Arts) in the Netherlands which undertakes prevention, complaint handling, support and tools. At the beginning of 2025 another interesting Dutch initiative called Heal the Healer has been launched. It aims at improving mental well-being within the music industry and tries to address the high levels of stress, burnout, and emotional strain experienced by artists, producers, managers, and other professionals whose part of their careers is taking care of others. By offering tailor-made resources, peer-support networks, accessible therapeutic interventions and mental-health training tailored to address the stress linked to touring and performing, the project helps individuals working in the industry to enhance their own emotional resilience. This initiative not only promotes self-care among healers but also helps foster a healthier, more sustainable music ecosystem. Another example is Music Minds Matter in the UK, an initiative supported by the music industry, including the Musicians Union through advocacy, research, outreach, and joint campaigning.⁵⁰ In other countries the topic is often handled by dedicated prevention services in the workplace, publicly funded

49 European Mental Health Week is an example of such an initiative <https://www.mentalhealththeurope.org/mental-health-social-rights-european-mental-health-week-2025s-theme/> with the topic for the 2025 edition *Care for mental health, invest in social rights*.

50 Detailed list of the allies can be found here: <https://www.musicmindsmatter.org.uk/allies>. More info can be found at: <https://www.musicmindsmatter.org.uk/about>.

institutions or NGOs. Business-oriented entities are also active but their offer is not always affordable for all artists.

- Based on the literature review and interviews with two artists (an actor and a dancer), a psychologist providing support for artists active in the live performance and a president of a musicians' trade union from one of the EU country the following patterns can be identified:
- Young people entering the industry are more vulnerable. They are often not prepared to face the challenges specific for the sector as self-care and strategies for mitigation of the professional risks are not yet widely taught in the artistic higher education institutions,
- Young individuals entering the industry often encounter an expectation gap resulting from the disparity between their educational experiences and the realities of a professional career.⁵¹ Many are surprised to find that a career in music is often poorly paid, precarious, and highly challenging or competitive. This gap between expectations and reality can lead to feelings of disillusionment and mental health challenges among emerging artists. Educational institutions should try to manage this gap by incorporating comprehensive career transition planning into their curricula and by addressing the practical and psychological challenges of being an artist.
- At the same time, the younger generation is often the driving force for a change. This is for at least two reasons. Firstly, young performers are less and less willing to accept unhealthy work relations (like abuse of power and hierarchy, all kinds of inequalities, precarity) and are more open to question the status quo and to look for solutions. Secondly, at the beginning of their careers they are often linked to some informal groups and movements that are often quicker than well-established institutions in undertaking action aiming at improving the situation for artists.
- The quality of mental health support is a critical factor in its effectiveness. Job-related counselling should be delivered by professionals who not only possess appropriate psychological or psychotherapeutic qualifications, but who also have a deep understanding of the specific characteristics and demands of the live performance sector. Without this contextual knowledge, counselling risks being ineffective or even counterproductive, as clients may feel misunderstood or unable to relate their experiences to a practitioner unfamiliar with the nuances of their professional environment.

51 *When Music Speaks: Mental Health and Next Steps in the Danish Music Industry* report by the Partnership for Sustainable Development, 2024

II.3. OBSERVATIONS ON THE EU REGULATORY LANDSCAPE

The EU Member States all have elaborated work health and safety regulations. The European Union framework in this area is based on Article 153 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. This framework covers all aspects of workplace health and safety including working environment and conditions, social security and protection of workers, and consultation of employees.⁵²

ARTICLE 153 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union gives the EU the authority to adopt legislation (directives) in the field of safety and health at work, in order to support and complement the activities of Member States.

OSH “FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE” (89/391/EEC) defines the main principles to encourage improvements in the safety and health of workers. The directive sets minimum safety and health requirements throughout the European Union, while allowing Member States to maintain or establish more detailed, national measures. Member States have discretion as to the implementation of the Framework Directive, although reporting on implementation to the European Commission is required.

The OSH Framework Directive is accompanied by further directives focusing on specific aspects of safety and health at work. Together they form the fundamentals of European safety and health legislation. Since 1989, 25 directives with more detailed requirements were adopted; these cover a broad range of topics and risks such as physical, chemical and biological agents, general workplace requirements, work equipment, and personal protective equipment. Several are relevant for the live performance sector including Directive 2003/10/EC on the exposure of workers to the risks arising from noise. This directive sets binding exposure limits and requires employers, such as venues and production companies, to assess and control noise risks, provide hearing protection, and offer training and health surveillance. Chapter 8 of the directive specifically recognises the challenges in the music and entertainment industry.

For better protection of the workers the European Commission has adopted various strategic policy documents:

- The strategic framework on health and safety at work 2021–2027 identifies key objectives for health and safety at work,

⁵² Full overview of the health and safety legal basis can be found at the European Commission website: https://employment-social-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies-and-activities/rights-work/health-and-safety-work_en

presents key actions and describes instruments to address these

- The Commission Communication *Safer and Healthier Work for All - Modernisation of the EU Occupational Safety and Health Legislation and Policy*, adopted on January 2017, proposes key actions in specific OSH priority areas
- Health and safety is also part of the European Pillar of Social Rights, proclaimed in 2017.
- Since 1994 the **EUROPEAN AGENCY FOR SAFETY & HEALTH AT WORK (EU-OSHA)** has promoted risk prevention and safe and healthy workplaces in Europe by providing information, research, and tools for businesses, workers, and governments. In cooperation with European social partners in the live performance sector (Pearle*-Live Performance Europe, representing employers' associations in Europe, EAEA - European Arts and Entertainment Alliance representing the workers' associations. EAEA is the sectoral alliance bringing together the International Federation of Actors (FIA), the International Federation of Musicians (FIM) and UNI-MEI, Global Union for Media and Entertainment) an Online interactive Risk Assessment (OiRA) tools have been specifically designed for the live performance sector.

The European Commission's 2023 Communication on a comprehensive approach to mental health is also worth mentioning in this context. The strategic framework it outlines is relevant to the live performance sector in several ways. The document underscores the importance of integrating mental health into all policies, recognizing workplaces as critical environments for promoting well-being and addressing psychosocial risks. The document stresses that mental health challenges have economic as well as social costs, with work-related stress, burnout, and mental ill-health identified as major issues affecting individuals across the EU. The Commission calls for early intervention, cross-sectoral cooperation, and specific focus on vulnerable groups, including young people who constitute a significant portion of the live performance workforce. Moreover, it calls for establishing inclusive, accessible support and highlights the therapeutic role of arts and culture in enhancing mental health resilience.⁵³

⁵³ Full text of the Communication can be found here: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=COM%3A2023%3A298%3AFIN>

II.4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The live performance sector stands at a critical moment where mental health must be addressed as a core component of occupational well-being. The challenges faced by performers, technicians, and venue workers demand a sector-specific approach to mental health infrastructure.

INVESTING IN YOUNG professionals is essential to ensure the future of the live performance sector. Many individuals enter this field early in their careers, even when still finalizing formal education, and immediately face high pressure, and often precarious work environments. Without adequate support, these emerging artists and technicians are particularly vulnerable to burnout, mental health struggles, and early exit from the profession. Supporting youth through targeted training, mentorship programs, and mental health resources not only strengthens their personal resilience but also fosters a more diverse and creative industry.

At the same time, older workers must not be neglected. As the workforce in the live performance sector becomes more age-diverse, it is essential to recognize and address the specific needs of older professionals. Evidence shows that older workers are more vulnerable to the effects of fatigue, particularly in roles requiring night work or extended hours. Additionally, age discrimination, whether implicit in casting decisions or reflected in limited access to training and job opportunities, increases their feeling of insecurity. To ensure that older professionals can continue contributing meaningfully to the sector, dedicated policies should be introduced. These might include flexible scheduling, ergonomic adaptations, access to mental health resources, targeted upskilling, and protections against age-related bias in hiring and employment practices.

CONFIDENTIAL, EASILY ACCESSIBLE services – such as counselling, peer support networks, and mental health hotlines – should become standard practice and should be widely promoted within the sector. To achieve lasting impact, mental health must be fully embedded in occupational health and safety frameworks and supported by sectoral agreements and collective bargaining. Incorporating well-being clauses into contracts and policies can help maintain long-term focus on mental resilience.

A MORE INCLUSIVE and equitable approach is essential. Artists from marginalised communities (people with disabilities, ethnically diverse, LGBTQ+, and individuals facing financial hardship) often face challenges in being represented. Accessible services must be developed to ensure that all

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THE LIVE PERFORMANCE SECTOR STANDS AT A CRITICAL MOMENT WHERE HEALTH MUST BE ADDRESSED AS A CORE COMPONENT OF OCCUPATIONAL WELL-BEING.”

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TO ACHIEVE LASTING IMPACT, MENTAL HEALTH MUST BE FULLY EMBEDDED IN OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY FRAMEWORKS AND SUPPORTED BY SECTORAL AGREEMENTS AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING.”

professionals, regardless of background or employment status, receive the support they need.

Employers in cultural institutions have a significant role to play. They can create supportive workplaces by investing in mental health literacy among managers, offering employee well-being programs, and opening space for conversations about stress and burnout. Such actions not only foster healthier teams but also contribute to safer and more productive work environments.

RESEARCH AND DATA collection on mental health in the live performance sector is more and more present but still remains insufficient and fragmented. EU-supported or national initiatives could be launched to find synergies in existing research and to close the gaps. This would be particularly helpful in regions where relatively less is known about the current situation, especially in Eastern and Southern Europe. Cross-border exchanges of best practices through joint projects, sectoral meetings, and publicly available toolkits could be actively supported to foster shared learning and information exchange. This may not be linked to new or additional funding, but rather to enhanced cooperation among all stakeholders and a commitment to improving the efficiency and co-ordination of research efforts.

ADDRESSING AUDIENCE BEHAVIOUR also deserves attention. Incidents of aggression and harassment directed at performers or staff must be eliminated. Initiatives such as the UK's *Safer Theatres Charter* or the Dutch *Guide to dealing with outspoken and aggressive reactions at performances for youth and young people* should be scaled up and implemented across Member States to promote respectful, inclusive cultural spaces.

IMPORTANTLY, THE HEALING power of the live performance must not be underestimated. Theatre, music and dance performances can serve as a powerful force for community resilience, emotional expression, and social cohesion. To achieve that, public and private funding may include schemes for mental health-focused artistic initiatives that benefit both creators and audiences.

FINALLY, SPECIAL ATTENTION must be given to self-employed and freelance workers – many of whom fall outside traditional safety nets. Extending access to occupational health services, offering income guarantees, and providing microgrants or mental health subsidies can help build a more sustainable and mentally resilient workforce across the sector.

IN SHORT, ENSURING a healthy future for the live performance sector requires not only good legal bases, policies and tools but also funding to support the mental well-being of those who contribute to the cultural life.

SOCIAL PARTNERS, BOTH employers’ organizations and trade unions, have a central role to play in advancing health and safety and mental health. They are well positioned to identify shared challenges, negotiate tailored solutions, and push for policy changes that reflect the reality of the industry and ensure that workers’ well-being remains at the heart of industry standards. At both national and EU levels, social partners can act as advocates for inclusive, rights-based approaches to mental health, driving innovation through collaborative projects, joint recommendations, and monitoring of implementation. Strengthening the capacities of social partners and reinforcing the mechanisms of social dialogue is essential to sustain meaningful progress and ensure the effective roll-out of health and well-being strategies across diverse cultural contexts.

CHAPTER III. “RIDERS ON THE STORM”: SOCIAL PARTNERS FACING CLIMATE CHALLENGES IN LIVE PERFORMANCE



III.1. THE CASE FOR CLIMATE ACTION BY THE LIVE PERFORMANCE SECTOR

This section first discusses the sector’s contribution to greenhouse gas emissions, then its exposure to climate-related risks. Further, it discusses the importance of actions by the sector’s stakeholders on these two fronts.

III.1.1 EMISSIONS OF GREENHOUSE GASES

Exact data on global greenhouse gas emissions is not available at the level of specific sectors, such as live performance. It is nonetheless relatively safe to assume that the sector would not count among the major contributors to emissions responsible for climate change.

At the same time, the related emissions are not negligible. Broad-er studies attempting to assess the climate impact of events suggest that audience travel is likely to be responsible for the largest part of event-related emissions. Other important categories include transport related to the production of events, emissions related to energy usage in venues, and the construction of temporary structures.⁵⁴

It is estimated that globally, live concerts and festivals generate up to 5 million tons of CO₂ per year.⁵⁵ The estimated split of emissions by underlying activity is in line with the one suggested above. Audience travel is the primary culprit, followed by energy use, and waste. Touring by artists and large-scale events bringing in large audiences are hence likely among the most carbon-intensive aspects of the live performance sector, due to associated (air) travel for artists and freight, as well as long-distance travel by audiences, including by car and other high-emissions means of transport. One source estimates audience travel to contribute as much as around 40% of the average festival footprint.⁵⁶

54 The analysis looked at a broader set of business events rather than the events by the live performance sector, including exhibitions, conferences, and other types of meetings. The results are still likely to be broadly comparable to what can be expected in case of live performance, especially larger events (festivals, large concerts, performances in specialised venues – theatres, etc.). See Isla, *Temperature check Europe 2025*, available at <https://weareisla.co.uk/#>

55 More information: *Decarbonizing the Music Industry: Music to your Ears!*, <https://illuminem.com/illuminemvoices/decarbonizing-the-music-industry-music-to-your-ears>

56 <https://www.agreenerfuture.com/carbonimpactsassessment>

5.000.000

AMOUNT OF CO₂ LIVE CONCERTS AND FESTIVALS GENERATE GLOBALLY PER YEAR, IN TONS.

40%

ESTIMATED SHARE OF CARBON FOOTPRINT DERIVED FROM AUDIENCE TRAVELS

III.1.2 EXPOSURE TO CLIMATE-RELATED RISKS

The live performance sector has vulnerabilities that amplify its exposure to climate risks. This applies in particular to larger live performance events gathering big audiences in one place. Disruptions caused by extreme weather, power outages, or transport breakdowns can then have immediate and severe impacts on both the safety and financial viability of all the stakeholders. Any open-air performances face similar challenges. Comparable difficulties can also apply to smaller-scale performances, especially when the venues lack insulation, heating, cooling or ventilation systems that could cope with unusually hot or cold conditions.

The increasing occurrence of extreme weather events across Europe has become a clear trend that is expected to continue in the future.⁵⁷ For example, in August 2025, Europe experienced another severe heat-wave. In several places across the continent, temperature records were broken.⁵⁸ During this period, European festivals were heavily affected by extreme heat, forcing organisers to adapt quickly to safeguard audiences and artists. Record-breaking heatwaves across Spain, Italy, France, Austria, the UK, and Scandinavia created health and safety risks, prompting measures such as shaded waiting areas, ventilated tents, water sprayers, free drinking water, and cooling stations at Rock Werchter festival in Belgium and LIDO Sounds in Austria. Denmark's Roskilde Festival faced not only 34 °C heat but also storms, heavy rain, and wind that disrupted camping areas. But in extreme weather, organisers' responses have their limits and sometimes the events must simply be cancelled.

It is important to highlight that the summer of 2025 was not unusual, and similar situations occurred in previous years. This demonstrates that excessive temperatures are becoming a structural threat for both outdoor and indoor shows, with festivals increasingly forced to embed climate resilience and emergency planning into their core operations.⁵⁹

Touring artists may be also affected by weather conditions along their routes, complicating travel and performance planning. These climate-driven factors not only affect the sector's sustainability but also its capacity to safely deliver cultural experiences.

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EXCESSIVE TEMPERATURES
ARE BECOMING A STRUCTURAL
THREAT FOR BOTH OUTDOOR
AND INDOOR SHOWS...”

⁵⁷ For some discussion see e.g. the work by the European Environment Agency, <https://www.eea.europa.eu/en/topics/in-depth/extreme-weather-floods-droughts-and-heatwaves?activeTab=07e50b68-8bf2-4641-ba6b-eda1afd544be>

⁵⁸ Temperature records broken as extreme heat grips parts of Europe, <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2025/aug/13/temperature-records-heatwave-europe-france-croatia-wildfires>

⁵⁹ More information: <https://www.iqmagazine.com/2025/07/european-festivals-extreme-weather>

III.1.3 LIVE PERFORMANCE SECTOR CAN LEAD THE WAY

While live performance is not among the major emitting sectors, any emission reductions contribute to the common goal. Efforts in this direction are hence clearly important on their own and worth supporting. However, there is also another channel through which climate-related actions taken by the sector stakeholders and supported by its social partners can have an indirect and potentially larger impact on global emission paths.

Artists, performers and cultural institutions can act as supporters and promoters of changes in social behaviour.⁶⁰ This applies to stars with high visibility and a large audience for both in-person performances and other forms of contact with followers, but can also apply to smaller entities and even individual performers with a good understanding of and strong links to local communities sharing similar challenges with their audiences (e.g. threat of climate-related heat waves or floods).

The potential of such indirect multiplier effects from actions taken by institutions, trade unions, or groups of performers can hardly be overestimated. In the current environment of rising denialism on human-induced climate change, this educational and promotional aspect becomes particularly important.

A similar argument applies to climate resilience building measures by the sector. While potentially more difficult to publicise, there appears to be a certain potential for mobilising followers regarding measures taken e.g. to improve insulation of music or theatre venues or to strengthen flood protection in certain spaces linked to live performances.

60 See e.g. M. Burke, D. Ockwell, L. Whitmarsh (2018), Participatory arts and affective engagement with climate change: *The missing link in achieving climate compatible behaviour change?*, Global Environmental Change, Vol 49, pp. 95-105, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2018.02.007>; Fancourt D, Finn S. *What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and well-being?* A scoping review [Internet]. Copenhagen: WHO Regional Office for Europe; 2019. (Health Evidence Network synthesis report, No. 67.) 2. RESULTS. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK553778/>; Lee Down (2022), *Artists as Agents of Social Change Past and Present*, <https://artsartistsartwork.com/artists-as-agents-of-social-change-past-and-present/>

III.2 EXAMPLES OF DIVERSE INITIATIVES WITHIN AND FOR THE SECTOR

Social partners across Europe increasingly recognise that climate change poses not only environmental but also health, safety, and sustainability challenges for the live performance sector. While the depth of engagement and concrete actions vary from country to country, many initiatives are shaped by broader European frameworks and a wide range of European legislation to which the sector also has to comply.

At the EU level, the Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee for the Live Performance Sector has been active for more than two decades, providing a platform for negotiation and joint action, influencing policy on employment, working conditions, and health and safety. In recent years, it has been increasingly working on sustainability, the reduction of climate impact, and climate resilience. Alongside this, the audiovisual social dialogue has produced shared standards, joint research, and collaborative initiatives that help organisations and workers adapt to the realities of a changing climate and minimise their contributions to this change. An important step was the adoption in 2024 of a European Framework of Actions on Skills in the Audiovisual and Live Performance Sectors by the European social partners FIM, FIA, UNI MEI, Pearle*, European Federation of Journalists, and the European Broadcasting Union. This framework sets out shared values and commitments to support skills development, lifelong learning, and professional training across the sector. It highlights the importance of equipping workers and organisations for the green transition, the digital shift, and more resilient and sustainable career paths. The Framework also points to the role of training in addressing urgent employment and social challenges, including climate adaptation and sustainability practices. Its rollout across Europe, supported by EU funding, is designed to strengthen capacity at both national and regional levels.⁶¹

Building on this foundation, this chapter presents selected examples of initiatives that illustrate how social partners and cultural networks are responding to the climate crisis.

A particularly wide diversity of the discussed initiatives makes their classification somewhat challenging. Given the ambition of this report to be of practical value to social partners that may want to join or adapt

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AN IMPORTANT STEP WAS THE ADOPTION IN 2024 OF A EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK OF ACTIONS ON SKILLS IN THE AUDIOVISUAL AND LIVE PERFORMANCE SECTORS...”

⁶¹ Learn more about the European Framework of Actions on Skills in the Audiovisual and Live Performance here: <https://www.creativeskillseurope.eu/blog/2024/03/04/european-social-partners-adopt-a-framework-of-actions-on-skills-in-the-audiovisual-and-live-performance-sectors/>

certain initiatives, the following logic has been applied. First comes the presentation of international initiatives. In many cases there is scope for national partners to join them or to directly adapt the developed solutions to the local context for example by making the information and materials available in local languages. The next section presents some national solutions. The final section takes a look at a selection of other innovative approaches and tools that may serve as inspiration for those looking to develop actions.

This report largely leaves aside one other potentially important role of the live performance sector in relation to climate action. While The Doors’ song *Riders on the Storm* that is used in the title of this report was not calling for climate action, a large number of performers include such calls in their work.⁶²

III.2.1 SECTOR-WIDE STANDARDS

International standard ISO 20121 for the sustainable management of events, including cultural events serves as a foundation for developing further tools and schemes. It provides a comprehensive framework for organizations to integrate sustainability into every aspect of event planning and execution, focusing on managing social, economic, and environmental impacts responsibly. The standard supports reducing negative impacts like waste generation, excessive resource consumption, and community disruption while maximizing positive legacies such as community benefits and economic opportunities.

There are also national standards and country-specific regulations that govern environmental aspects of cultural activities, ensuring compliance at local levels. In Europe, the EMAS (Eco-Management and Audit Scheme) system serves as a key reference for environmental management and continuous improvement.

Besides these sector-specific and general standards, environmental certifications are crucial. These accreditations, granted by independent bodies, verify compliance with sustainability standards in products, services, processes, or organizations. They recognize responsible practices in areas such as energy efficiency, waste management, sustainable resource use, and emissions reduction. Such certifications demonstrate environmental commitment, enhance reputation with customers and society, and are essential in the performing arts sector to ensure productions and events minimise their environmental footprint while fostering sustainability.

62 For examples see e.g. <https://www.nature.org/en-us/what-we-do/our-priorities/tackle-climate-change/climate-change-stories/climate-change-songs/>

III.2.2 TOOLS AND GUIDES

THE THEATRE GREEN BOOK

The Theatre Green Book is an industrywide initiative launched to drive sustainability in the performing arts sector in response to the climate crisis. It provides a free, practical framework suitable for anyone working in theatre, dance, opera, and live performance, regardless of role or scale. The resource offers detailed guidance, best practice toolkits, and a measurement system covering productions, operations, and venue management to help reduce environmental impact, improve resource efficiency, and lower costs.

The Theatre Green Book also fosters a community of practitioners working collaboratively to share knowledge and implement meaningful change, featuring collective standards and self-certification to track progress. It views sustainability not as a limitation on creativity but as an opportunity for innovation and artistic growth, having gained significant buy-in from major theatre companies and independent practitioners alike.

The initiative includes regular webinars and forums to support ongoing learning and peer exchange, helping the live performance sector move towards net zero emissions and sustainable cultural practices. As climate change is a global issue, it has a smaller European version that emerged as a result of a collaboration between ETC, Renew Culture, and the Theatre Green Book initiative. Importantly, it has been adopted in several national contexts and, when necessary, translated into the national language. For now, there are 16 adaptations for various countries in the EU, as well as outside Europe, such as Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, and South Korea. New translations are underway. These are: Catalan, Arabic, Lithuanian, Estonian, Norwegian, Greek, and an adaptation relevant for the Latin American context.

THE ULTIMATE COOKBOOK FOR CULTURAL MANAGERS: THE EU GREEN DEAL AND LIVE PERFORMANCE ORGANISATIONS

The Ultimate Cookbook for Cultural Managers: The EU Green Deal and Live Performance Organisations is a practical guide published by Pearle* – Live Performance Europe and the European Festivals Association (EFA) in 2023 to help cultural managers and live performance organisations navigate the complexities of EU climate law and initiatives associated with the European Green Deal. The guide explains EU climate goals and shows how these policies impact the live performance sector, covering areas such as circular economy, energy use, sustainable mobility, and access to green funding.

It includes practical examples and legal explanations tailored to the cross-border nature of live performances and encourages organisations to integrate sustainability into their daily practices and shift their oper-

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THE THEATRE GREEN BOOK IS AN INDUSTRYWIDE INITIATIVE LAUNCHED TO DRIVE SUSTAINABILITY IN THE PERFORMING ARTS SECTOR IN RESPONSE TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS.”

ational mindset to contribute to making Europe the first climate-neutral continent by 2050. The publication has been accompanied by a series of seminars and workshops with legal and academic experts and provides sector-specific insights to help performing arts professionals align with European sustainability targets effectively. “The Ultimate Cookbook for Cultural Managers: The EU Green Deal and Live Performance Organisations” is a particularly comprehensive resource for the sector. The publication is supported by an infographic presenting the core areas of importance of the green deal and the live performance sector.⁶³

THE VISION FOR SUSTAINABLE EVENTS FORUM

The Vision for Sustainable Events Forum is a not-for-profit initiative established to support the live events industry in taking meaningful action on the climate crisis. Founded in 2010 in Bristol, UK, it now represents over 1,000 event businesses and industry leaders committed to significantly reducing the environmental impact of events. The forum provides a comprehensive roadmap through free access to tools, resources, guides, case studies, and a green suppliers directory, all designed to empower event professionals with the knowledge and means to implement sustainable practices.

It connects members and partners to foster collaboration and share best practices, aiming to make sustainable events the norm rather than the exception. The initiative is driven by a steering group of outdoor events associations and sustainability experts, reflecting a broad industry commitment to climate action and responsible event management.

CARBON CALCULATORS

There are a number of CO₂ calculators developed for the live performance sector. Some are available for free, others offer a basic free version alongside paid, advanced versions. A pioneer in this field for the cultural sector is Julie’s Bicycle, which provides a variety of free carbon calculators through its Creative Climate Tools platform.⁶⁴ These tools are designed to help organizations and individuals measure and understand the environmental impacts of their venues, tours, productions, events, or festivals. Since their launch, more than 5,000 organizations across 50 countries have used these tools to track energy use, water consumption, waste, travel, and production materials, enabling better-informed environmental strategies and priorities.

Beyond Julie’s Bicycle, several other organizations offer carbon calculators tailored for the live performance sector. For example, the

⁶³ More information about the Ultimate Cookbook for Cultural Managers can be found here <https://www.pearle.eu/publication/infographic-on-the-eu-green-deal-and-live-performance-organisations>

⁶⁴ More information: <https://juliesbicycle.com/our-work/creative-green/creative-climate-tools/>

Green Producers Club⁶⁵ in Scandinavian countries serves the sector by providing tools and resources to calculate and reduce carbon footprints in production activities. The Action Network for Sustainability in Culture and Media (ANKM)⁶⁶ offers climate accounting tools and resources tailored to cultural and media sectors, supporting environmental sustainability efforts in Germany. In France there is Fairly Score⁶⁷ – an innovative, sector-specific impact calculator that integrates carbon footprint measurement with broader environmental and social responsibility criteria, including biodiversity, water, waste management, and social inclusion. It helps event organizers, venues, and producers to assess, track, and improve their sustainability practices while providing transparent scores for audiences, artists, and partners. The tool supports multiple data input methods, ranging from collaborative questionnaires to automated integration with management software and is built on established frameworks to ensure accuracy.

These tools are instrumental in empowering event organizers, artists, venues, and industry professionals to take meaningful steps toward reducing their carbon footprints. Many of these calculators also encourage users to explore sustainable alternatives, model reduced-carbon scenarios, and invest in climate solutions.

III.2.3 SUSTAINABLE TOURING AND ARTIST MOBILITY

UK ROADMAP TO SUPER LOW CARBON LIVE MUSIC

In 2021, the UK rock band Massive Attack commissioned the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research to develop a roadmap for reducing emissions in live music touring and performances. As a result, a document was created setting ambitious targets such as achieving zero CO₂ emissions from venues by 2035, minimizing electricity use through efficient lighting and sound equipment, and reducing audience and business travel emissions by encouraging public transport.⁶⁸

More recently, in March 2025, a new report from the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research revealed that their ‘Roadmap to Super Low Carbon Live Music’ successfully supported Massive Attack in delivering the lowest-carbon live music event of its kind. Following the methodology from the roadmap, Massive Attack hosted ACT 1.5 – a one-day music festival in August 2024 attended by over 32,000 people. The event implemented a range of climate measures, achieving significant carbon emissions reductions compared to a typical outdoor concert.

65 More information: <https://www.greenproducers.club/>

66 More information: <https://aktionsnetzwerk-nachhaltigkeit.de/klimabilanzen/>

67 More information: <https://fairly.run/fairly-score/>

68 More information: <https://tyndall.ac.uk/news/massive-attack-publish-tyndall-centre-climate-change-live-music-roadmap/>

These included becoming the world’s first-ever 100% battery-powered festival, using electric trucks to transport batteries for renewable recharging, serving entirely plant-based catering, and providing free electric shuttle buses alongside extra trains to encourage sustainable travel. The festival further supported green transport by banning onsite car parking and prioritizing local residents in ticket sales. Equipment transport was drastically reduced and converted to electric vehicles, while waste management focused on composting, food waste prevention, and banning single-use plastics and disposable vapes.

“CAST IT HERE”

UK performers’ union Equity launched a campaign called *Cast it here* promoting local casting opportunities that reduce the need for long-distance travel associated with productions. By encouraging the use of regional talent, the campaign helps to lower the carbon footprint of theatre, film, and television productions, which traditionally involve significant travel-related emissions when cast and crew are transported from major urban centres like London.

The campaign is driven by local Equity branches and local organisations that adapt the approach to their contexts by organising local casting open days, building forums with local casting agents, or lobbying local governments to make local casting a funding condition. Equity encourages members to join their local branches and create *Cast It Here* action groups to push for sustained change, ensuring that professional local talent is consistently considered as part of standard casting processes. Local casting reduces emissions from transportation, supports sustainable work environments, and strengthens local communities by creating a more resilient and climate-conscious industry. *Cast It Here* is therefore part of broader efforts by Equity UK to address climate change alongside social equity in the creative sector.

BETTER LIVE PROJECT (LOW-CARBON TOURING)

Low-carbon touring models in Europe are increasingly emerging as a strategy to reduce the carbon footprint of live music events. *Better Live* is a European cooperation project involving 11 partners, including promoters, venues, and organisations, and focuses on researching and experimenting with greener, more decentralised touring practices mostly for jazz artists and improvised music artists. The project (2023–2026) aims to reduce emissions from artist and audience mobility while supporting international artist circulation and increasing programming diversity across Europe.

GREEN TRAVEL & TRANSPORT GUIDE

The fifth edition of the *Green Travel & Transport Guide for Events* is designed for all those working for and attending live events, including

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UK PERFORMERS’ UNION EQUITY LAUNCHED A CAMPAIGN ‘CAST IT HERE’ PROMOTING LOCAL CASTING OPPORTUNITIES THAT REDUCE THE NEED FOR LONG-DISTANCE TRAVEL ASSOCIATED WITH PRODUCTIONS.”

organisers, artist managers, ticketing agencies, suppliers, transport providers, and anyone who can influence these groups. It offers clear strategies to reduce travel-related emissions. As travel is the single largest contributor to the carbon footprint of live events (accounting for up to 80–90% of total emissions), addressing this challenge is demanding but achievable and requires collaboration across the sector.

The guide combines the latest research, case studies, and practical tools to embed low-carbon mobility into the heart of event planning. Supported by partners such as Arts Council England, the Welsh Government Event Innovation Fund, and Big Green Coach, the initiative promotes practical steps from integrating public transport ticketing and collecting quality travel data to piloting zero-emission construction equipment and testing carbon budgeting for artist touring.⁶⁹

SLOW TOURING

Another approach is “slow” or “smart” touring. This concept began gaining attention in the early 2010s, emerging from broader cultural shifts inspired by the Slow Movement, which originated as a protest against fast-food culture and valued sustainability. In the live performance context, it has been adapted to counteract the fast, intensive, and often environmentally damaging touring schedules typical of music and theatre tours.

Key promoters of slow touring include artists like Charles Gil, a French musician living in Finland, and organisations such as the Improvised Music Company in Dublin, who call for stays in fewer locations, reduced air travel, and deeper engagement with local communities. Slow touring prioritises artist wellbeing and sustainability by promoting touring schedules that are less packed, more local or regional, and that reduce carbon emissions from transportation and logistics. Overall, slow touring has evolved as part of a cultural and ecological response over the last decade, rooted in principles of the Slow Movement and adapted by forward-thinking artists and institutions striving for sustainable artistic practices.

LIVEUROPE

Liveurope is a pan-European initiative established in 2014 and co-funded by the Creative Europe programme of the European Union. It unites 24 iconic concert venues across 24 European countries to promote European music diversity by supporting emerging artists and helping them reach new audiences beyond their home countries.

The initiative is expanding its focus to include sustainability, promoting data collection on artists’ touring practices and encouraging sustainable transport, alongside efforts to foster inclusion and gender

⁶⁹ More information: <https://onboard.earth/the-onboard-earth-sustainable-travel-guide-for-festivals-and-events/>

balance in European music. It actively supports venues across Europe in adopting sustainable practices and promoting environmentally responsible touring and audience behaviour.

Several Liveurope member venues have launched green mobility initiatives to reduce carbon emissions focusing particularly on audience travel. Examples include venues like L'Aéronef in France, which offers reimbursement for public transport, secure bike parking, and encourages car-sharing; Ancienne Belgique which combines sustainability with audience engagement to create long-term ecological strategies; and other venues collaborating with local public transport to make greener travel easier and more attractive for concertgoers. Liveurope's role is to foster dialogue and the sharing of best practices among its broad network of venues across Europe.

III.2.4 AUDIENCE MOBILITY AND LOW-CARBON TRAVEL

With the growing understanding of the role of audience travel for the overall carbon footprint of the live performance sector, initiatives to address the issue have started to emerge. One impactful strategy involves bundling public transport costs into the price of event tickets. This removes the financial barrier to greener travel and makes sustainable travel the default option rather than an extra choice. By presenting a concert or theatre ticket that doubles as a valid train, tram, or bus pass, organisers can significantly shift travel patterns away from private cars.

This solution is often applied in Germany for example where several regional theatres and festivals (e.g. Ruhrtriennale, Berliner Festspiele) have partnered with local transport companies so that entry tickets automatically serve as a valid regional train or public transport pass on the day of the performance. Another example is the OpenAir St. Gallen in Switzerland festival which includes discounted national train tickets and free shuttle services in its passes, making car travel less attractive.

III.2.5 INSTITUTIONAL AND ORGANISATIONAL PRACTICES

ARVIVA (FRANCE)

ARVIVA (Arts vivants, Arts durables), founded in 2020, is an association dedicated to helping the live performance sector confront the dual challenge of addressing environmental issues while remaining resilient to their impacts. With the mission statement “There are no live shows on a dead planet”, they aim to reduce the sector's environmental footprint and promote a more tolerant and just cultural environment. ARVIVA operates through peer consultation, knowledge exchange, and the development of practical tools that support sustainability. The association also observes and analyses sector practices, while highlighting inspiring

initiatives and experiments in sustainable live arts. It has a diverse membership including local authorities, consultants, cultural organizations, and individuals. All members can benefit from rich resources: peer-to-peer learning, support in implementing climate-conscious strategies, training, etc.

In 2024, ARVIVA launched its Action Plan for the Ecological Transformation of the Performing Arts. The plan aims to facilitate the sector's ecological transition through coordinated, practical measures structured around five key priorities: (1) training and capacity building, including the integration of sustainability in leadership and artistic education; (2) cultural policy and funding, with the promotion of eco-conditionality; (3) work and employment, focused on green clauses, sustainability officers, and fair working conditions; (4) information and tools, to enhance data collection, monitoring, and resource sharing; and (5) mobility and logistics, encouraging low-carbon touring and collaboration with transport providers. The plan is coordinated by ARVIVA and monitored by a multi-stakeholder committee, ensuring that it remains a living framework adaptable to evolving research and emerging challenges.

A GREENER MUSIC SCENE (DENMARK)

The Partnership for Sustainable Music has launched the initiative *A Greener Music Scene*. It is an alliance comprising more than 90 companies, organisations, and institutions from the Danish music ecosystem. The partnership was established to collectively address sustainability challenges in the music industry, including equal access for talents, health and wellbeing on and behind the stage, and the environmental impact of music-related activities. The partnership uses data-driven approaches, such as a greenhouse gas inventory mapping developed with The Footprint Firm, to understand and reduce the sector's total CO2 emissions. They also collaborate with concert venues and festivals to identify needs and support the green transition on the live music scene in Denmark.

The partnership is coordinated through a secretariat based at KODA, a music industry organisation, and decisions are guided by a steering committee including representatives from organisations like Dansk Live and Live Nation. The initiative works closely with musicians and industry stakeholders by providing knowledge, tools, and collaborative platforms to empower their transition to sustainable practices.

LUOTO PROJECT (FINLAND)

The LuoTo project (*Luovien alojen ekologisen kestävyysmurroksen toimenpideohjelman - Action Programme for the Ecological Sustainability Transition in the Creative Sector*) focuses on promoting sustainability within the creative industries including the performing arts. It aims to strengthen the sector's ecological awareness and capacity.



THERE ARE NO LIVE SHOWS
ON A DEAD PLANET"

The project began by collecting and sharing knowledge, skills, and experiences from practitioners, and as it advances, it is developing an action plan to better equip creatives in making their productions greener. Reducing emissions, especially those due to audience travel, and promoting circular economy practices in set design and resource use, is at the core of the project. LuoTo supports this change by organising workshops, drafting publications, and resource platforms like Elma.live. It also stresses the importance of artistic content as a means to develop eco-social literacy and audience engagement. Practical case studies, including those from the Finnish National Opera and Ballet and Helsinki City Theatre, offer tangible models of sustainable performance practices. LuoTo project is managed by a consortium and receives funding from The Helsinki-Uusimaa Regional Council, Creasus ry, MyStash, the Ministry of the Environment, Uniarts Helsinki and Aalto University.

III.2.6 CONTRACTUAL AND GOVERNANCE TOOLS

GREEN CLAUSES IN CONTRACTS

Green clauses in contracts between parties are becoming more and more popular. The simplest solution is to have a clause requiring an environmental sustainability policy, to keep it reviewed and updated regularly, and adhered to in practice.

GREEN RIDERS

Green riders in contracts are emerging as a practical tool for embedding sustainability into the live performance sector. Traditionally, artists' riders focus on hospitality and technical requirements, but an increasing number of performers request low-carbon alternatives as part of their agreements. These “green riders” may include preference for vegetarian or locally sourced catering, reusable or compostable service ware, avoidance of single-use plastics, provision of public transport passes for crews and audiences, or a preference for train travel over short-haul flights.

By leveraging their contractual power, high-profile artists and touring companies can push venues, promoters, and suppliers to adopt more sustainable practices across the production chain. Apart from reducing emissions, green riders also serve as an educational tool. They convey climate commitment to audiences and peers and help normalise low-carbon choices within the industry. While more common in music touring, they are increasingly relevant to theatre, dance, and festivals, providing a bottom-up mechanism that complements sector-wide frameworks and collective bargaining efforts.

REUSE CLAUSES FOR SETS AND PROPS

An increasing number of theatres, festivals, and touring companies are introducing contractual clauses that mandate or encourage the reuse

of stage decorations, sets and props. These clauses ensure that productions are designed with a circular economy mindset: materials must be disassembled, stored, repurposed, or shared with other productions rather than discarded. In some cases, producers are required to document the end-of-life plan for all scenic elements before a show is approved, or to use a minimum percentage of recycled materials.

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An interesting example is the Collectif 17h25, which unites five big cultural institutions: the Opéra de Lyon, the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence, the Opéra national de Paris, the Théâtre du Châtelet, and La Monnaie in Brussels that aim to make stage design more sustainable. The group recently launched the MOD 200, a standardized modular steel structure designed for scenic construction. By creating a shared library of structural elements compatible with multiple theatres, the collective aims to reduce the carbon footprint linked to the fabrication, storage, and transport of set pieces. This system allows for efficient reuse and interchangeability across productions and institutions.

These contractual and collaborative measures serve multiple purposes: they reduce waste and emissions, lower production costs, and create opportunities for new collaborative networks between venues. They also shift responsibility from individual designers to the institutional level, ensuring that sustainability goals are embedded in the entire production process, not just left to personal choice.

GREEN MANAGERS AND CONSULTANTS

Sustainability roles are increasingly recognised and incorporated to lead environmental initiatives within organisations. Many performing arts organisations are committing to becoming climate neutral by 2030, often made visible on their websites, in programme booklets, or inside the venue. This includes integrating sustainability strategies across theatre productions, operations, and buildings. Specific roles often found in music and performing arts organisations include Green Team Leaders, Sustainability Coordinators, or Environmental Managers, tasked with creating and implementing green policies, training staff, and driving sustainable production practices.

Many European cultural networks, especially those funded under the Creative Europe programme, are offering capacity-building and training courses to their members as part of the conditions for funding, which

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BY LEVERAGING THEIR CONTRACTUAL POWER, HIGH-PROFILE ARTISTS AND TOURING COMPANIES CAN PUSH VENUES, PROMOTERS, AND SUPPLIERS TO ADOPT MORE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES ACROSS THE PRODUCTION CHAIN.”

helps professionals integrate sustainability into all aspects of their work and equips them with the knowledge and tools for climate action. Such capacity-building initiatives reflect how performing arts organisations are institutionalising green roles, especially in larger entities, though these positions may be integrated within broader operational or artistic management teams rather than standalone jobs.

Examples of theatres that have a sustainability manager include Burgtheater Wien (Austria), National Theatre Prague (Czech Republic), and Théâtre de Liège (Belgium). Overall, while dedicated sustainability roles may not yet be present in every institution, the sector is rapidly moving toward formalising these positions as part of a broader commitment to climate neutrality and sustainable cultural management.

III.2.7 FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS FOR CLIMATE ACTION

Pension funds could be a powerful lever for climate action in the cultural and live performance sector. By adding climate responsibility into the sectoral pension schemes, social partners could help direct their members to join those pension companies that have already aligned their policies with climate goals. By doing this, they can also protect the long-term interests of members, ensuring that savings are invested in ways that are socially responsible and that support the green transition.

Performers’ trade union Equity, UK has taken a step in aligning financial security with climate action through its “Green Your Pension” initiative, developed under the union’s Green New Deal Network. From November 2024, all new members enrolling in the Equity Pension Scheme are automatically placed into a greener default fund that excludes investments in thermal coal and in companies deriving more than 10% of their revenue from oil and gas. Instead, the fund prioritises investments that are positively aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including climate action, clean energy, and gender equality.

Existing members of the pension scheme have the choice to invest in a totally fossil free pension fund. This shift was the result of the Make My Money Matter campaign, supported by prominent actors such as Olivia Colman and Benedict Cumberbatch, who called for green investment through pension reform.

Across Europe, similar developments in France, Germany, and at EU level highlight how pension systems are increasingly being aligned with climate goals, providing a strategic opportunity for the live performance sector to link its ecological commitments with financial resilience.

III.2.8 INNOVATIVE TECHNICAL SOLUTIONS

There are multiple technical solutions that may be applicable in the live performance sector. The examples below are not meant to be representative, but rather to show a diverse range of options.

ENERGY-HARVESTING DANCEFLOORS

One interesting approach to integrating sustainability into performance spaces has been the introduction of energy-harvesting dancefloors. These floors capture kinetic energy from performers or audiences and convert it into electricity, similarly to bicycle generators that are more often used in theatres. In 2023 at Camden People's Theatre, the Pigfoot Theatre pioneered the world's first energy-generating dancefloor in live theatre for their show *Hot In Here*.

The floor, designed by Jack Hathaway, used vertical motion to generate power. Each tile produces energy proportionate to movement – so a solo dancer generates a small amount, but an ensemble powering the stage can produce a substantial amount of electricity. This technology not only powers performances but was also perceived as a metaphor for collective action: small contributions can add up to real impact. Versions of these floors have been used at events during Coldplay's Music of the Spheres World Tour, offering both a spectacle and sustainable messaging.

MYCELIUM-BASED ACOUSTIC PANELS

Mycelium-Based Acoustic Panels are mycelium-based composites, grown on organic waste like cardboard and paper. These panels display strong sound absorption properties, particularly in mid- and high-frequency ranges (from around 500 Hz to above 2 kHz), thanks to their porous structure and adaptable density. These properties make mycelium panels a promising biodegradable alternative to synthetic foam-based acoustic absorbers.

ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY LIGHTING

Environmentally friendly lighting focuses on reducing energy consumption and minimising environmental impact while still delivering dynamic and immersive visual experiences. The shift from traditional and halogen bulbs to energy-efficient LED technology is central to this effort, as LEDs provide superior brightness with significantly lower power usage and longer lifespans. Many venues and production companies are also exploring the use of renewable energy sources like solar-powered generators to power lighting systems, further reducing carbon emissions. Beyond energy efficiency, sustainable lighting practices include minimising heat emission and thus reducing cooling needs. Advances in smart lighting and automated control systems allow real-time optimisation of lighting levels to match performance needs, thus avoiding excessive energy use.

III.3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Climate change is among the largest challenges for humankind in the coming decades. It directly affects the live performance sector, and the sector’s actions contribute to the underlying causes of global warming. There is thus a strong case for the social partners to work together and with other stakeholders to promote change in the sector, significantly lowering its greenhouse gas emissions and more broadly environmental impact, and increasing the sector’s resilience to the effects of ongoing and expected changes.

Importantly, the sector holds unique power to drive cultural change through artistic content and by modelling sustainable practices. This is due to the popular interest in the actions of the sector and its representatives, the star status of some performers, and the potential of artistic productions themselves as powerful means of communicating on major social challenges and ways of approaching them.

The engagement of social partners is particularly important for at least two reasons. Firstly, they are well placed to work on ensuring that the transition towards greener live performance is carried out with fairness. Climate initiatives aimed at reducing carbon emissions can be costly, and agreeing on how to share the costs requires dialogue based on trust. There are also risks that greening can unintentionally exclude certain individuals or groups. For example, venues implementing green rules may need to increase ticket prices to cover sustainability costs, potentially excluding lower-income audiences. Similarly, the promotion of slow and smart touring and sustainable travel may be practically problematic or costly for freelancers, artists with limited resources, or those living in remote areas and lacking efficient public transport.

The second reason why the role of social partners is important in this context has to do with the need to build broader coalitions. While some individual initiatives may be effective on their own, better results often require the engagement of public institutions, civil society actors, or business actors from outside the sector. The experience of social dialogue in the sector then becomes invaluable, enabling it to speak with one voice to external stakeholders.

The brief presentation of selected initiatives in this report shows a broad variety of approaches, stakeholder involvement, scale, and timelines. The examples listed are certainly by no means exhaustive, and new initiatives are bound to emerge, including from outside of the sector. It is thus also difficult to provide a concise and complete summary and recommendations.

In terms of underlying principles, the following points are worth considering by social partners:



CLIMATE INITIATIVES AIMED AT REDUCING CARBON EMISSIONS CAN BE COSTLY, AND AGREEING ON HOW TO SHARE THE COSTS REQUIRES DIALOGUE BASED ON TRUST.”

THINK AND ACT proactively. Climate change related challenges will not dissipate and are instead bound to intensify. So will most likely the regulatory measures (an increasing price of carbon emissions) and social pressure. Acting now will improve the future situation of the sector.

REACH OUT TO other stakeholders and build coalitions. The underlying challenge is universal, and many actors may be willing to join forces, offer their own solutions, or learn from the sector's best practices.

BE ACTIVE IN learning, trying and testing solutions AND reflecting on successes and mistakes. The challenge is not an easy one; otherwise, a solution would have been found previously.

USE THE SECTOR'S superpower: its position in society and the power of artistic performance. The overall impact can be much greater than what may be achieved in the sector itself.

EXPLORE VARIOUS SOLUTIONS: from technical adaptations to governance arrangements and awareness raising. The challenges are multifaceted, so the solutions will be likewise.

KEEP FAIRNESS AS an important principle of any actions and make sure that measures do not marginalise certain groups. This matters immensely, also for the support for the course of actions within the sector, among audiences, and beyond.



ANNEXES:



A1. DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted by an independent researcher with experience in projects aiming at enhancing social dialogue in the live performance sector. The methodological framework was agreed with the Project's Steering Committee, bringing together representatives from the four European social partners in the live performance sector: FIM (International Federation of Musicians), FIA (International Federation of Actors), UNI Europa – Media, Entertainment and Arts (EURO MEI), and Pearle* Live Performance Europe.

The study adopted a mixed-method approach combining desk research, a Europe-wide online survey, and semi-structured in-depth interviews with a number of key stakeholders. This triangulated methodology ensured that findings were grounded in the everyday lives of individuals working in the sector and reflected the diverse and complex reality of the live performance sector in Europe.

FIGURE A1.1. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH TO THE STUDY



The desk research phase provided the foundation for the study. It involved a review of existing literature, sectoral reports, EU policy documents, and the collective agreements. This stage also included mapping publicly available data on initiatives and projects undertaken by national and European social partners. The desk research informed the design of the survey questionnaire and the interview guidelines.

The online survey was launched in mid-January 2024 and ran until mid-March 2024. It was distributed to approximately 125 entities, including both trade unions and employers' associations from all EU Member States, as well as in Norway, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. The response rate was exceptionally high (nearly 70%) with at least one response from each EU country. The survey comprised two main parts: the first focused on identifying existing collective agreements, social dialogue initiatives, and social dialogue success stories. The second collected information on training needs and thematic preferences for further research and capacity-building.

The survey results served several complementary purposes. They mapped existing social dialogue initiatives and collective agreements and supported the creation of a database of these resources for sectoral use. They also guided the selection of topics for in-person training sessions and research reports. Following the initial analysis, the researcher prepared draft summaries of the key findings, which were shared with the Steering Committee.

To complement the information gathered from the desk research and the survey, seven in-depth interviews were conducted between May and September 2025. Among interviewees were trade union representatives, sector experts, and practitioners from Poland, Sweden, Czechia, Denmark, and the United Kingdom. These semi-structured interviews explored in greater depth the experiences, perspectives, and strategies of those directly engaged in mitigating risks related to artificial intelligence, developing and implementing initiatives to improve mental health and sustainability. Interviewees provided valuable insights into national contexts, practical challenges, and success factors shaping social partners' engagement in the discussed areas.

Each thematic report, including the present one, was reviewed by the project Steering Committee, whose feedback was incorporated into the final text.

The triangulation of data from desk research, survey responses, interviews, and discussions during the in-person training ensured that the conclusions of the report reflect the sector's diverse reality.

A2. DESCRIPTION OF THE DATABASE

The database developed through this project offers a mapping of collective bargaining agreements across Europe, as well as social partners' initiatives across Europe in the live performance sector.

The database can be found here: <https://lpsocialpartners.notion.site/Strengthening-Capacities-in-the-Live-Performance-Sector-1dddb594d-14d805ea6d9f271d6107dda>

In 2024, a survey was circulated among national social partners across Europe to identify existing collective bargaining agreements, social dialogue initiatives, and examples of successful cooperation between social partners. Respondents were asked to share information on collective agreements in the live performance sector, including the topics they cover related to employment and working conditions. The survey also gathered examples of joint initiatives and projects through which social partners worked together to achieve better working conditions for performing arts professionals. Running from mid-January 2024 until mid-March 2024, the results served as the basis for developing the database.

Due to the dual nature of the survey, the database was structured into two parts: a mapping of collective agreements and a database of social partners' initiatives.

A2.1 MAPPING OF COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS

As this database was the result of voluntary input from national social partners, the overview does not aim to be comprehensive. It is a living tool that remains open to additions, updates, and adjustments, especially since some collective agreements have expiration dates and will be renegotiated.

Organised by country, the mapping covers 23 countries at the time of publication (June 2025). For each country, the database provides information on the trade unions and employer associations involved in collective bargaining for the live performance sector, an overview of collective agreements at national, sectoral, or company level, and a list of topics they cover.

Users can search through the database via a search bar and can filter the inputs based on countries, social partners, and topics.

A2.2 SOCIAL PARTNERS INITIATIVES

The database of social partners' initiatives covers, at the time of publication (June 2025), almost 50 initiatives, projects, and success stories.

It highlights initiatives that social partners have conducted, whether of their own initiative ("Unilateral initiatives") or jointly with other national social partners ("Social dialogue initiatives"). This database demon-

strates the wide range of areas in which social partners are actively involved: skills and training, health and safety, pensions, counselling, information provision, toolkits, working conditions, and more.

Similar to the mapping of collective agreements, these initiatives can be filtered by social partners, topics, and country.

The database highlights the sheer variety of actions and agreements put in place by trade unions and employers' associations to the benefit of those active in the sector. Even users of such sectoral services may not be aware of the social partner activity that underpins them. It also gives greater insight into the role played by trade unions and employers' associations in upholding living and working conditions in the live performance sector across Europe. The database also complements and ties into activities of the European social partners in relation to upskilling and reskilling, gender equality, and health and safety.

The platform will be continuously updated and remains open for contributions from national social partners wishing to share their agreements and initiatives.

FIGURE A2.1. EXAMPLE OF THE DATABASE – COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS

