



April 28 2021

Commissioner Mariya Gabriel
Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth
European Commission

Commissioner Thierry Breton
Internal Market
European Commission

Dear Commissioners,

Following the launch of the European Commission Communication on “a common path to safe and sustained re-opening”, we are writing to you as representatives of the live events sector and creators community to share our views and recommendations on the necessary next steps to be taken for a coordinated, swift and safe reopening of live events.

As rightly mentioned in the Communication “Reopening will take longer, cost more, and be less sustainable if the Member States do not work together; moreover reopening in a coordinated manner ensures the continuity of the internal market which is inextricably linked to the economic and social life of Europeans”. This naturally requires coordination at EU level. The political commitment shown in the Communication was a major and long-awaited initiative for our sectors.

There is not much time to make a meaningful change for the coming months, which are vital for the very existence of many artists and cultural businesses in the EU. The signatories of this letter have worked closely with national and local governments, and national and EU health authorities. We have organised test events, developed scientific evidence and standards presenting how to create safe events for audiences, which can be the initial basis and a useful reference point for the European Commission to further work on this topic. And we are devoted to continue to give our input and exchange with you, with the aim to begin this crucial process as soon as possible.

There have been good and important developments in some Member States and specific regions, however the level of political commitment varies from one country to another. The European Commission’s role in making this a political priority, promoting best practices and persuading Member States to develop a perspective for a safe and sustained reopening is therefore absolutely crucial for our sector, for the entire

European economy and for the health, safety and trust of its citizens.

We believe that the initiative needs to take into consideration the following guiding principles:

- European Commission coordination that builds on existing national solutions, best practices and evidence, some of which we have included in the attached document;
- The close involvement of key stakeholders and careful assessment of their experiences in order not to duplicate work. The several papers and fact-sheets published by the signatories of this letter can give useful examples in this respect;
- Immediate engagement between Member States, health authorities and the sector, followed by an intensive and focused work plan at EU level. Though we are all working on this issue in our respective countries and regions, EU coordination is what will make the real difference;
- A practical approach that focuses on the coordination of best practices, direction of health authorities and clear political pressure, as opposed to the prolonged development of new procedures and red-tape that requires consensus at EU level.

We have outlined in the attached document our initial views and proposals on the necessary first steps that we believe can assist your work on a coordinated re-opening strategy. Obviously, we see this as a work in progress, in which our sector can work with you to develop and adapt practical and dedicated solutions.

We remain at your disposal for further details and clarifications and very much look forward to the start of what promises to be another historic European Commission mobilisation to address the needs of EU citizens in this crisis.

Your sincerely,

AFEM – Association for Electronic Music

ARA – Arena Resilience Alliance

GESAC – The European Grouping of Societies of Authors and Composers

LIVE DMA – European Network for Live Music Associations

Liveurope – The live music platform for new European talent

PEARLE – Live Performance Europe

YOUROPE – The European Festival Association