

Joint call for a strong budget and an ambitious sectoral approach for music within the future AgoraEU programme



9 February 2026

We, the undersigned organisations from across Europe’s music ecosystem, **call on the EU institutions to adopt a sector-specific strategic approach for European music, with increased funding, alongside the horizontal actions in the future AgoraEU programme 2028-2034.**

Echoing the [statement](#) published in September 2025 by 21 European music organisations, **we strongly welcome the European Commission’s proposal to establish AgoraEU and the proposed increased budget allocated to the programme**, which should be regarded as an absolute minimum. A strong budget for culture would be in line with the European Commission’s ambition, with its Culture Compass, “to ensure culture is central to European unity, diversity and excellence”.

While artistic freedom, fair working conditions, and cultural diversity are under increasing pressure and should remain central to the programme, the proposed increased budget **offers a unique opportunity to**

develop a sectoral approach to address the specific and concrete challenges faced by the European music sector. As it stands, the AgoraEU proposal fails to mention any dedicated measures for music or follow-up to the Music Moves Europe (MME) initiatives, even though the current Creative Europe regulation (2021-2027) explicitly includes a sectoral action for music¹.

Why music requires dedicated attention in AgoraEU

The economic importance of the music sector in Europe is undeniable: it contributes €81.9 billion in gross value added to the GDP of the EU27 and UK, provides direct employment for more than 1.3 million people across the EU and generates €9.7 billion in export revenue². Micro, small and medium-sized businesses account for most of the European music sector's jobs and generate most of its added value.

At the crossroads of social, economic, and cultural policies, **music is also one of Europe's most accessible and influential cultural forms** and remains at the very core of what Europeans value and experience together. It fosters inclusion, strengthens democratic values, and enhances Europe's global cultural presence and international collaboration.

Yet, the **sector is confronted with significant challenges and major disruption:**

- **Generative AI** is accelerating at unprecedented speed, reshaping music creation, distribution, and business models, putting at risk creators' and rights holders' revenues, as well as the integrity of musical works.
- **Market concentration** across the sector is a growing issue, further exacerbating power imbalances along the value chain, limiting market access for small actors and jeopardising Europe's competitiveness, cultural diversity and capacity to thrive internationally.
- **European repertoire essentially struggles to travel across borders** due to fragmented markets, double taxation, complex administrative frameworks, and cultural barriers, all of which hinder cross-border mobility and limit Europe's musical diversity.
- **Music streaming** has become the main avenue for listening to music but fraudulent practices as well as the lack of transparency of algorithms and playlists have a detrimental impact on discoverability and on the economic sustainability of the European music sector, as identified by the European Parliament in its resolution on music streaming in 2024.³ Payment thresholds have led to revenue shifts and even complete demonetisation, harming in particular emerging artists and repertoire from smaller countries and languages or even more established artists in more niche genres.

AgoraEU should play an important role in helping the European music sector to address these challenges. Sector specific support for music would contribute to increasing the competitiveness, diversity and sustainability of Europe's music sector, in line with the general objectives of AgoraEU.

In 2024, the **European Parliament** called on the Commission to "*further improve the Creative Europe programme, in particular through comprehensive action on music*" and supported a "*European industrial strategy for music*", In January 2025, in a letter to the European Commission⁴, **the EU's 27 Ministers for**

¹ [Regulation \(EU\) 2021/818](#) of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing the Creative Europe Programme (2021 to 2027) and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1295/2013

² "[The Economic Impact of Music in Europe](#)" study by Oxford Economics, commissioned by the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry (IFPI) (2020)

³ [European Parliament resolution](#) of 17 January 2024 on cultural diversity and the conditions for authors in the European music streaming market

⁴ https://cultureactioneurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Letter_CreativeEurope_final.pdf

Culture underlined the need for sector-tailored incentives, stressing that EU strategies and funding must be flexible and responsive to the rapidly evolving needs of the cultural and creative ecosystem. At the end of 2025, the interim evaluation of the Creative Europe programme 2021-2027⁵ found that “*the dual (horizontal and sectorial) approach introduced in the Culture strand is successful and both approaches are complementary*”, and “*it is advised to keep a similar approach in the next programming period*”.

AgoraEU now offers a unique opportunity to finally deliver a meaningful strategic sector-specific support for the European music sector.

Our recommendations for AgoraEU 2028-2034

In line with the EU’s ambition to enhance the competitiveness and innovation potential of the music sector⁶, we call for the inclusion of the following measures in the AgoraEU regulation:

- **Secure earmarked funding for music in the AgoraEU regulation** (as a minimum budget), alongside the horizontal actions.
- **Reintroduce in AgoraEU a dedicated sectoral action for music** with meaningful, structural and strategic sectoral actions tailored to the sector’s specific needs.
- **Ensure a structured and regular dialogue between the European Commission and the music sector** on the future annual work programmes as well as the calls and programme dedicated to music, to guarantee they align with the needs of the sector across the entire value chain.
- **Support sector-specific studies and enhanced data collection to monitor and analyse the music sector’s trends and challenges**, providing policy makers and stakeholders with the evidence and data they need to inform the right policies and programmes. The establishment of a European Music Observatory (or equivalent monitoring body) – as called for by the European Parliament and building on the insights of the 2018-2020 Music Moves Europe preparatory action – would play a key role to achieve those objectives.

We count on the European Parliament and the Council to support the introduction of a comprehensive strategy for music, along with an appropriate dedicated budget, to give the music sector the visibility, investment, and policy recognition it deserves.

We stand ready to engage constructively and provide our expertise throughout the entire legislative process.

⁵ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:52025SC0418>

⁶ [Culture Compass for Europe](#) from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, November 2025

List of signatories

- **AEC** - Association of European Conservatoires
- **AEPO-ARTIS** - Association of European Performers' Organisations
- **Center for Music Ecosystems**
- **ECSA** - European Composer and Songwriter Alliance
- **EJN** - Europe Jazz Network
- **EMEE** - European Music Exporters Exchange
- **EMMA** - European Music Managers Alliance
- **ESNS** - Eurosonic Noorderslag
- **Europavox**
- **European Soundmakers**
- **European Talent Exchange**
- **FIM** - International Federation of Musicians
- **GESAC** - European Grouping of Societies of Authors and Composers
- **IAO** - International Artist Organisation
- **IMPALA** - Independent Music Companies Association
- **IMPF** - The global trade body for independent music publishers
- **Live DMA**
- **Liveurope**
- **MCN** - Music Cities Network
- **MTE** - Music Tech Europe
- **REMA** - European Network for Early Music
- **Reset!**
- **YOUROPE**