



Department for  
Business, Energy  
& Industrial Strategy

The Rt Hon Sir George Howarth MP  
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Dear Sir George,

Thank you for your email dated 12 January to the Rt Hon Priti Patel MP, on behalf of a number of your constituents, about the exclusion of creative professionals from the list of permitted activities for short-term business visitors within the EU. Your letter has been passed to this Department and I am replying as this matter falls within my Ministerial portfolio. I sincerely apologise for the delayed response.

I am grateful to you for raising these concerns. It is important to note that as of 1 January 2021, creative professionals can continue to move between the UK and EU for work purposes. However, some will need to apply for visas, work permits or both when travelling temporarily to the EU.

From 1 January 2021, the EU has implemented legislation which ensures UK nationals will not need a visa when travelling to and within the Schengen Area to undertake a limited range of activities. This applies for short stays of up to 90 days in any 180 day period. This includes activities such as attending business meetings, tourism, cultural or sports events. In addition, the UK and the EU have agreed to a list of 11 activities that can be carried out by short-term business visitors without the need for a work permit. This has been agreed on a reciprocal basis in most Member States.

During our negotiations with the EU, the UK proposed measures to capture the work done by some creative professionals and their accompanying staff through the list of permitted activities for short-term business visitors. In practice this would have delivered an outcome that is closer to the UK's approach to creative professionals, but these proposals were rejected by the EU. The EU's own proposals in this matter fell short of the UK's offer, as they would not have enabled creative professionals to be accompanied by their technical staff, nor waived work-permits.

In practice, Member States may allow more activities to be performed without a visa or a work-permit than stipulated either in the Schengen Border Code or the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement.

For those undertaking long-term stays involving work or providing a service under contract, a visa and/or work permit may be required. If your constituents are travelling to several Member States for work purposes, they may need to apply for documents in each country they work in.

UK nationals should therefore check the rules of each country they intend to travel to ahead of time. This is necessary in case they need to apply for a visa, work permit, or provide other documentation.

We recognise the concerns of the sector regarding the new arrangements. The Government is committed to supporting them as they get to grips with the new systems and processes. Government officials, with the able support of Arts Council England, continue to work with the sector. This is intended to identify uncertainties and ensure guidance is available to the sector going forward, in advance of the easing of travel restrictions.

The Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) held a roundtable discussion with key representatives from across the cultural sector on the 20th of January. An outcome of the roundtable was the establishment of a DCMS led working group. This group will include representatives from other key Government departments, as well as sector representatives from across our cultural and creative sectors. It will address the range of specific issues with a view to supporting the sector as far as possible to confidently work in the EU. I have tasked my officials, working with officials in other Government departments, to set up and run this new forum. We intend to set up the first meeting in the near future.

Furthermore, the Government is taking unprecedented action to help the music sector during the crisis. We've provided £1.5 billion of direct support for arts across the UK, the biggest one off investment ever, and a sum that far exceeds what's been provided in other countries. That builds on billions more coming from furlough, the self-employed income support scheme and other government support.

To find out whether a visa and/or work permit is required when travelling to the EU, your constituents can access the link below and find the guide for the specific country they are travelling to. Under the section 'Business travel and entry requirements', they will find links to the country's website. They can also find information about which activities require visas and/or work permits and how to apply: [www.gov.uk/government/collections/providing-services-to-eea-and-efta-countries-after-eu-exit](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/providing-services-to-eea-and-efta-countries-after-eu-exit).

Further guidance on travelling to the EU for business after the transition period is available at:

[www.gov.uk/visit-europe-1-january-2021/business-travel-extra-requirements](https://www.gov.uk/visit-europe-1-january-2021/business-travel-extra-requirements).

Thank you once again for taking the time to write. I hope the information above is helpful in responding to your constituents.



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