



Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport

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Rt Hon Sir George Howarth MP
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Dear Sir George,

Thank you for your correspondence of 4 January, to the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, the Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP, on behalf of your constituent,

regarding visa- free touring for artists and musicians in the European Union. I have been asked to reply on the department's behalf. Please accept my apologies for the delay in you receiving a response.

UK performers and artists are of course still able to tour and perform in the EU and vice versa. This government recognises the importance of the UK's thriving cultural industries, and pushed for ambitious arrangements for performers and artists to be able to work across Europe after the end of freedom of movement. In negotiations with the EU on business travel, we proposed to expand the list of permitted activities for short-term business visitors, notably to include the work done by artists, entertainers and musicians, and their supporting staff. This would have ensured that musicians could have travelled to the EU without requiring work-permits. However, regrettably, the EU rejected all of our proposed additions to the list of short-term business visitor activities.

This outcome is regrettable, however there is scope to return to this issue in the future and we have made it clear that our door remains open should the EU change its mind. We recognise the concerns of the creative and cultural sectors regarding the new arrangements and are committed to supporting them as they get to grips with the changes to systems and processes. We have published guidance on GOV.UK, including [updated travel advice](#) for travelling to the EU, and we are engaging regularly with our embassies to support UK nationals abroad. Travellers should check what requirements they need to fulfil with the EU Member State they are travelling to, including to understand any local variations in the rules on paid work. Our agreement with the EU contains Transparency and Procedural Facilitation measures that will help ensure visa processes are as prompt and smooth as possible.

The government is determined to work closely with stakeholders to explore how we can support the sector to make touring easier. The Secretary of State for DCMS and the Minister for Digital and Culture held a roundtable discussion with key representatives from across the creative and cultural sectors on 20 January to discuss these issues, and we have committed to set up a new DCMS-led working group. This group, consisting of representatives from other key government departments, and sector representatives covering the breadth of our cultural and creative sectors, will tackle the range of specific issues with a view to assisting the sector as far as possible to work confidently in the EU.

Rt Hon John Whittingdale OBE MP
Minister of State for Media and Data

