



Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport

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Dear Tim,

Thank you for your correspondence of 22 September, to the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, the Rt Hon Nadine Dorries MP, regarding touring in the EU. I am replying as the minister responsible for touring in the EU. Please accept my apologies for the delay in response.

This Government recognises the importance of the UK's creative and cultural industries, not only to the economy and international reputation of the United Kingdom, but also to the wellbeing and enrichment of our people.

The UK took an ambitious approach during negotiations with the EU on our future relationship that would have ensured that touring artists and their support staff did not need work permits to perform in the EU. Regrettably, these proposals were rejected by the EU. The Government recognises that there are now changes in the way creative workers can work in the EU, and the sector will need to adapt to new requirements now we are no longer a Member State. It is worth noting that our recent trade deal with three EFTA countries (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein), which is based on the same offer that the EU rejected, demonstrates that the offer we made is workable, including in a single market context, and that we are continuing to fight to help our musicians and creative professionals tour abroad.

EU Member States are principally responsible for deciding the rules governing what work UK visitors can undertake in their countries. This is why the Government has worked with urgency and pace and spoken to every EU Member State about the importance of touring. From these extensive discussions, involving ministers, ambassadors and other officials, 20 out of 27 Member States have now confirmed that they offer visa and work permit free routes for UK musicians and performers undertaking some short-term touring activities. This includes most of the biggest touring markets, such as France, Germany, and the Netherlands. All these discussions with Member States are important steps in gaining clarity for the sector, and it is important to recognise that these visa and work permit free routes are available.

You specifically referred to Hungary. Through discussions with the Hungarian Government we have been informed that self-employed musicians and performers do not require a visa, work permit or residence permit for visits of up to 90 days. We recognise that it would be helpful to have more clarity on the arrangements and that is why we continue to engage with our counterparts to encourage them to provide clear and accessible guidance

Durations, precise definitions and requirements for touring can vary from Member State to Member State. Travellers should therefore check what requirements they need to fulfil with the



EU Member State to which they are travelling, including to understand any local variations in the rules and what processes they need to follow. That is why we have worked with Member States to encourage them to ensure their online guidance is clear and accessible, and with stakeholders to help clarify areas of uncertainty in industry-led guidance. As well as this, we have published guidance on GOV.UK, including updated travel advice for travelling to the EU, and individual business traveller summaries for EU Member States and EEA countries.

You raise the proposal of a pan European visa and work permit waiver. It is not Government policy to agree visa waivers, and the EU rejected our proposal to eliminate work permits for touring artists during negotiations last year. Instead, our focus is now on engaging with those Member States that do not offer any visa or work permit free routes for touring professionals: Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Malta, Portugal, and Spain, encouraging them to closely align to the UK's more generous rules. Formal approaches have been made to all these Member States, discussions are ongoing at ministerial and official level, and we are working with the sector to amplify each other's lobbying efforts.

The Government recognises there remain a number of challenges to touring. The DCMS-led Working Group has been a vital forum to bring together a wide range of sector representatives and government departments to discuss issues, including around customs and haulage. For example, we have clarified that individuals carrying portable musical instruments, in personal baggage or in a vehicle, may be able to use the Temporary Admission procedure and therefore not require an ATA Carnet when moving from the UK to the EU and vice versa. Regarding haulage, the Department for Transport, following discussions with the European Commission, has confirmed that the road transport market access rules under the Trade and Cooperation Agreement (TCA) do not apply to splitter vans. This means that their use by UK operators will continue to be governed by Member State law, as it was when the UK was a member of the EU.

It is in everyone's interests to support the ease of touring. We know that British creatives want to tour in the EU, and venues and audiences in the EU want to host them. By continuing to work across Government, in collaboration with the sector, and directly with Member States, we can support the creative and cultural industries to adapt to new arrangements and resume touring with confidence.

Thank you for writing on this important issue. I hope my response is helpful and that you are reassured that the work of musicians touring in the EU is at the top of our agenda.

With best wishes,



Julia Lopez MP
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