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Presidency of the European Council  
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Dear Presidency

**Performers Receiving No Revenue**

We are writing to you because of the dramatic situation performers have found themselves in as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We welcome your announcement of the Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative, including your support for small enterprises. We hope that performers will be classed as small enterprises. This could be a life-saver.

Already, most performers are receiving no revenue from the streaming services, which are now the main way consumers listen to music. Now, their income from live performance has suddenly stopped.

The COVID-19 pandemic has led governments, quite rightly, to enforce social distancing and ban gatherings outside the home. This means the immediate cancellation of live performances. Musicians who had bookings over the next weeks and months suddenly have no work and no income. Film studios are closed and actors have no work. Dancers on tour have had to come home. Recording sessions have been cancelled. Their only income is from broadcasting, private copying and other rights administered on their behalf by the Collective Management Organisations (CMOs).

What is incredible and completely unacceptable is that performers receive nothing or very little from the biggest, rapidly growing, and soon maybe the only revenue source, the internet, that makes up to 80% of the music industry revenue and a growing percentage of the audio-visual sector. Performers are the heart of the creative sector and it is completely unbelievable that a vast majority of them have been left out of any streaming incomes, and that their families cannot rely on income from the internet. The pandemic period, controversially, will generate peak revenues to all streaming businesses but not for performers.

This inequity, and the failure of the current contractual system was recognised by politicians during the debate around the Copyright Directive and Article 18 was adopted to give performers a remuneration right. That will not be implemented until June 2021 (unless Member States transpose the Directive early). In view of the current situation, the Commission should encourage Member States to implement the Directive as soon as possible so that all performers can share in streaming revenues from their recordings and receive appropriate remuneration.

It is really a shame that performers have to ask for social help from their national governments and their organisations, while their well-earned money is collected by intermediaries, that are reporting enormous growth of streaming revenues each financial quarter.

We ask you now to help performers in the EU survive this crisis.

Your Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative could be a lifeline for musicians, actors, dancers and the creative sector. Performers are first and foremost artists. But we are also micro businesses, relying on getting engagements (sales) for live performances and recordings. Now, we have no live performances or recordings, so no income.

We would very much like to help you ensure the Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative reaches the performers who need it now. We have systems for distributing royalties to performers and we will assist in any way to help performers – who are the lifeblood of the creative sector – survive this crisis.

We remain at your service to assist to facilitate this and we would welcome the opportunity to discuss this with you and your colleagues via video conference. We urge immediate action because the impact on performers from the COVID-19 pandemic has been immediate and dramatic.

With kind regards

Carlo Balzaretti  
Pianist and Board Director of ITSRIGHT, Italy

Christian Martin  
Bass guitarist and Chairman of Playright, Belgium

Domantas Razauskas  
Singer-songwriter and Chairman of AGATA, Lithuania

François Nowak  
Trombonist and President of SPEDIDAM, France

Goran Koncar  
Violinist and Board Director of HUZIP, Croatia

Grigoris Lampranidis

Pianist, Conductor and President of Apollon, Greece

Jan Drozdowski

Guitarist and Chairman of Union of Performing Artists STOART, Poland

Jan Granvik

Guitarist and Chairman of SAMI, Sweden

László Gyimesi

Bass Guitarist and President of EJI, Hungary

Ludvik Bagari

Actor and Vice President of AIPA, Slovenia

Luis Cobos

Conductor and President of AIE, Spain

Paddy Cole

Saxophonist and Chairman of RAAP, Ireland

Pedro Wallenstein

Double Bass and Chairman of GDA, Portugal

Tanel Padar

Singer and Board Member of EEL, Estonia



