



Department for  
Digital, Culture,  
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Richard Fuller MP  
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Dear Richard,

Thank you for your correspondence of 21 January, on behalf of your constituents, regarding Visa Arrangements for UK musicians and artists. Please accept my apologies for the delay in replying to you.

This government understands that the cultural and creative sectors rely on the ability to move people across borders quickly, simply, and with minimal cost and administration. Touring is a vital part of musicians and performers' careers, providing not only a vital income stream, but also enriching opportunities for cultural exchange across the world.

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, it is worth noting that 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 should the EU change its mind. The UK's rules for touring creative professionals are significantly more generous than in many EU Member States. It is within Member States' gift to make touring easier, and we are looking at how to work with bilateral partners to see how this can be done.

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.

When travelling for tours, cultural professionals will need to take goods in and out of the EU, including musical instruments, technical equipment and merchandise. Since 1 January 2021, customs processes apply to all movements of commercial and non-commercial goods between Great Britain and the EU. This means that new paperwork and processes need to be complied with.



To clarify, a carnet is not required for musicians with accompanied instruments (carried or taken with the individual in personal baggage or a vehicle) travelling between Great Britain and the EU. If not accompanied (carried as freight) then customs formalities (through a declaration or use of a Carnet) will be required. The management of EU import and export procedures is the responsibility of the customs authorities of the Member States, and it is important that businesses and individuals confirm the processes in advance of their journey.

We understand the concerns about these new arrangements and we are committed to supporting the sectors as they get to grips with the changes to systems and processes.

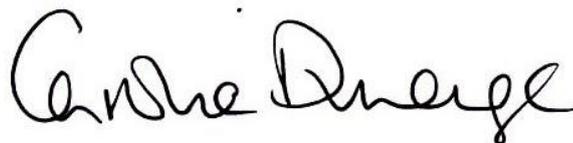
The government is determined to work closely with stakeholders to explore how we can support the sector to make touring easier. The Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) and I held a roundtable discussion with key representatives from across the creative and cultural sectors on 20 January to discuss these issues, and we have 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, is tackling the range of specific issues with a view to assisting the sector as far as possible to work confidently in the EU.

Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs has also launched a Brexit Support Fund - a grant scheme of £22.75 million to support small to medium enterprise's, with up to £2000 per business to access training or professional advice on border processes they have not used previously; e.g. customs, rules of origin and VAT.

The recommendations you have put forward are interesting and we are working with the sector and across government, including through the new working group, to explore options that will help address these issues so that touring in Europe can resume with ease as soon as it is safe to do so. We are fully committed to continuing our close dialogue with the creative industries sectors to make the new processes as straightforward as possible for UK artists performing across the continent.

I hope your constituents and yourself find this information useful.

With best wishes,



Caroline Dinenage MP  
**Minister of State for Digital and Culture**