



EAIPA

The European Association
of Independent Performing Arts

EAIPA Event Report

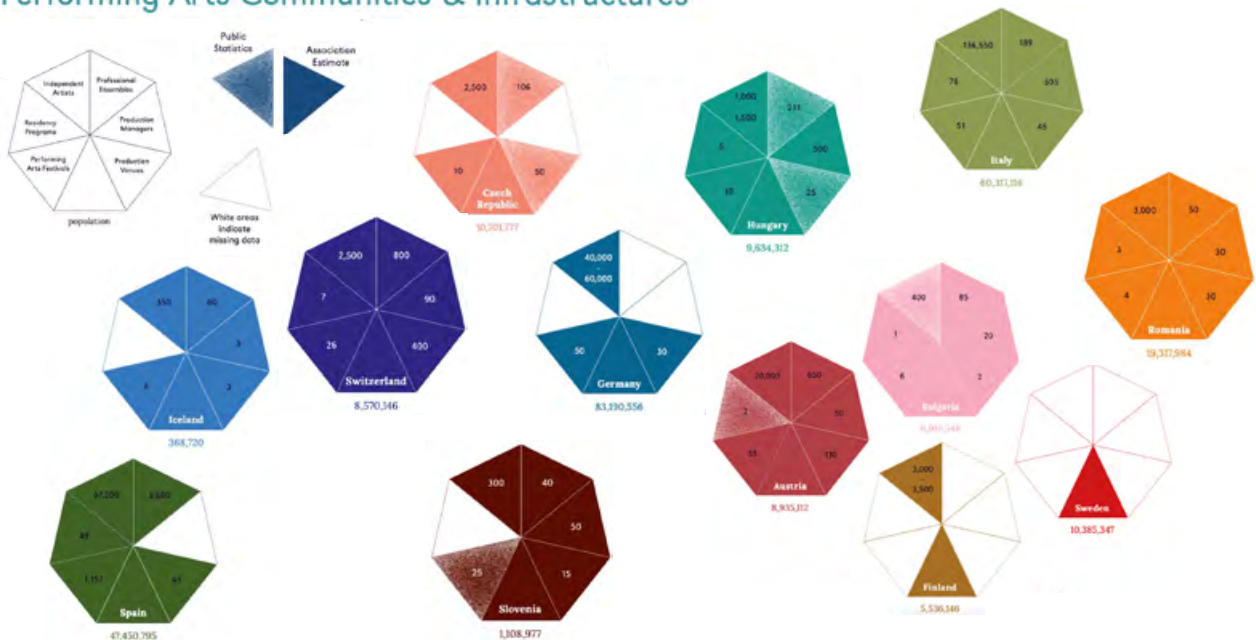
Inside Views to the Independent Performing Arts in Europe

The event “Inside Views to the Independent Performing Arts in Europe” marked the beginning of a series of public online events planned by EAIPA – the European Association of Independent Performing Arts. For this first event, EAIPA invited colleagues, performing arts professionals and representatives from politics, science and administration to join Thomas F. Eder’s research presentation “Introduction to the Independent Performing Arts in Europe – Thirteen Performing Arts Structures at a Glance” via zoom or live stream.

Unsurprisingly, Thomas F. Eder’s pioneering work sparked international interest, as it paves the way for the quantification of the independent performing arts field. Despite international relevance and recognition, the independent performing arts scene in Europe is still struggling for recognition as a field in its own right, independent from i.e. state or commercial theatre. The importance of Eder’s work lies in the provision of facts and figures that can be used for advocacy: to be able to accurately describe and represent the independent performing arts in meetings with politicians and policymakers.

For his research, Thomas F. Eder has surveyed 1031 independent performing arts professionals and conducted interviews with experts from EAIPA’s member associations.

Performing Arts Communities & Infrastructures



A lack of data

The struggle for recognition of the sector becomes blatant due to the absence of official statistic data. A fact underlined by a chart Thomas F. Eder presented which attempts to describe the communities and infrastructures in numbers: None of the thirteen presented countries were able to provide a complete statistical account. Every country had to rely either entirely or partly on estimates provided by their respective association's experts, because many national statistical offices either do not consider the independent performing arts as a separate field or, in some countries, have subsumed the sector in the same category as commercial theatre or creative industries – or simply don't account for the sector at all.

On the other hand, the estimated numbers portray a large workforce – amounting to almost 160,000 artists, 1,600 production managers and about 9,000 ensembles in 13 countries alone – which allows the conclusion that there must be several 100,000 independent performing arts professionals in Europe.

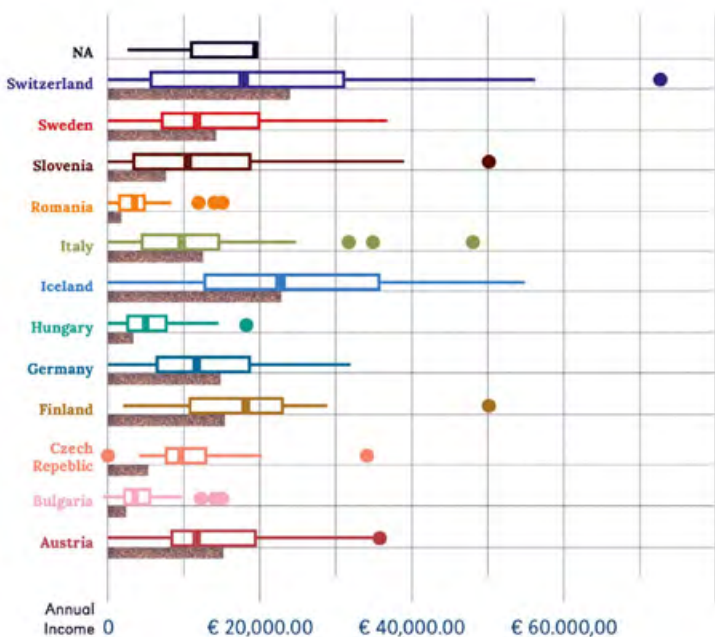
Risk of poverty despite high education standards

It is a well-known fact that the production conditions in the field of the independent performing arts are precarious. Temporary work contracts and a lack of protection, due to an absence of social and labour law standards, promote the general problem of poverty and self-exploitation.

In order to describe the social status of performing arts comprehensibly, Thomas F. Eder compared the income stated by participants of the survey with the risk of poverty threshold. Additionally, he inquired how many of the participants depend on additional income from a second profession in order to secure a livelihood, and he compared data about poverty in retirement age.

The findings of the study were, as expected, quite sobering: the research found that more than half of the respondents (52.09 %) were affected by poverty in 2020, with 77 % relying on a second job, and in most countries the association experts also assume that many agents are facing the risk of poverty in old age.

Social Status of Performing Arts Professionals



Social Status of Performing Arts Professionals

Percentage of Performing Arts Professionals Who Rely on a Second Job to Secure Their Income	Country	Percentage
	Finland	95 %
	Slovenia	86.7 %
	Iceland	84.5 %
	Bulgaria	82.2 %
	Romania	81.1 %
	Italy	79,7 %
	Austria	78.4 %
	Sweden	77.3 %
	Germany	73.6 %
	Hungary	73.3 %
	Switzerland	68.3 %
	Czech Republic	52.6 %



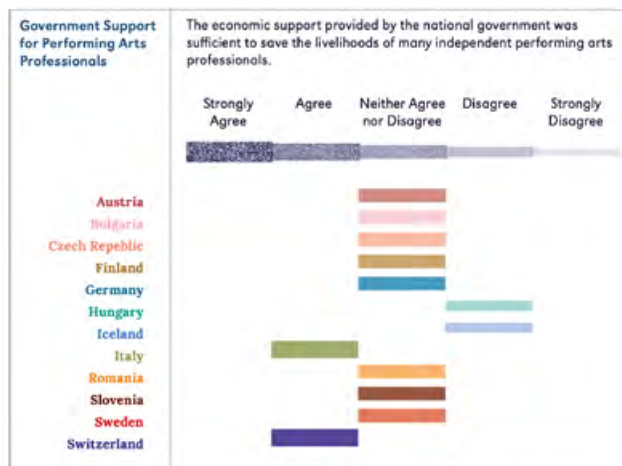
Low income in parts of the population is often connected to lower or little education. But in Eder's research, 72,4 % of those interviewed hold either a master's, a bachelor's or doctoral degree. The cause for the financial struggle therefore mostly lies in the project-based nature of the work, which leads to periods with no income and no regular contributions to social security systems. In some of the portrayed countries, governments have instated funds that try to account for the vulnerable position of performing arts professionals, but EAIPA's member associations consider them often insufficient and criticise that, in many cases, only artists benefit from those funds and leave other professionals unsupported. Around 20 % of the survey participants stated that they are not covered by any sort of social

security, because high charges give way to the tendency of avoiding payment and consequently lead to a loss of protection. Additionally, many risks besides basic health insurance, i.e. unemployment, care, retirement, etc., are not covered for freelancers even if they do pay into a social security system.

Ineptitude of conducting business during a pandemic

As an art form based on the idea of a live experience in front of an audience, the performing arts are naturally the worst kind of business to be in during a pandemic. Not only the experts from EAIPA member associations, but also 67,9 % of all interviewed individuals perceive the corona pandemic as a threat to their professional existence.

The Influence of the Coronavirus Pandemic



When comparing data from the year 2019 with the year 2020, Thomas F. Eder found that both the average income as well as the number of engagements for artists dropped. Despite governments' efforts to support the sector financially, it is still in danger of facing long-term damage as agents will be forced to change professions.

Striving for recognition and support

In order to improve the framework for independent performing arts professionals, democratically organised NGO associations have been campaigning for structural change, public and political recognition and an increase in funding budgets. These organisations are also shaping a solidary basis for networking, connectivity and exchange. Another graph presented by Eder shows that the associations' energy largely focuses on advocacy, reforming funding structures, increasing funding budgets and improving the working and social conditions for the independent performing arts – closely followed by creating qualification and networking opportunities.

A general dialogue between policy makers and performing arts associations is necessary for development in all of these areas, even though some level of interaction already exists in all countries participating in this study. Whether or not these interactions have satisfactory results varies – associations in Hungary, Italy, Romania and Slovenia struggle to get fully acknowledged by their governments as official representatives of the field on a national level, whereas in Sweden the advocacy organisation might get a place at the table but still has no say in new cultural policy or policy reforms.

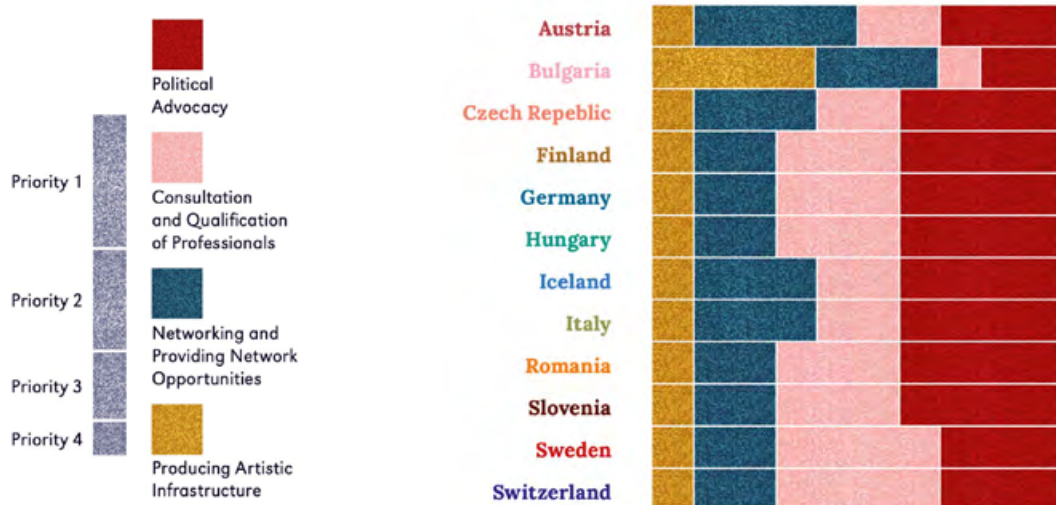
Too little funding, too much demand

Wherever public funding is involved, the demand for money outstrips supply. The independent performing arts are not exempt from this phenomenon. Thomas F. Eder portrays in his research how much funding is allocated to the sector in each country and capital city, relying – yet again – heavily on estimates by national associations.

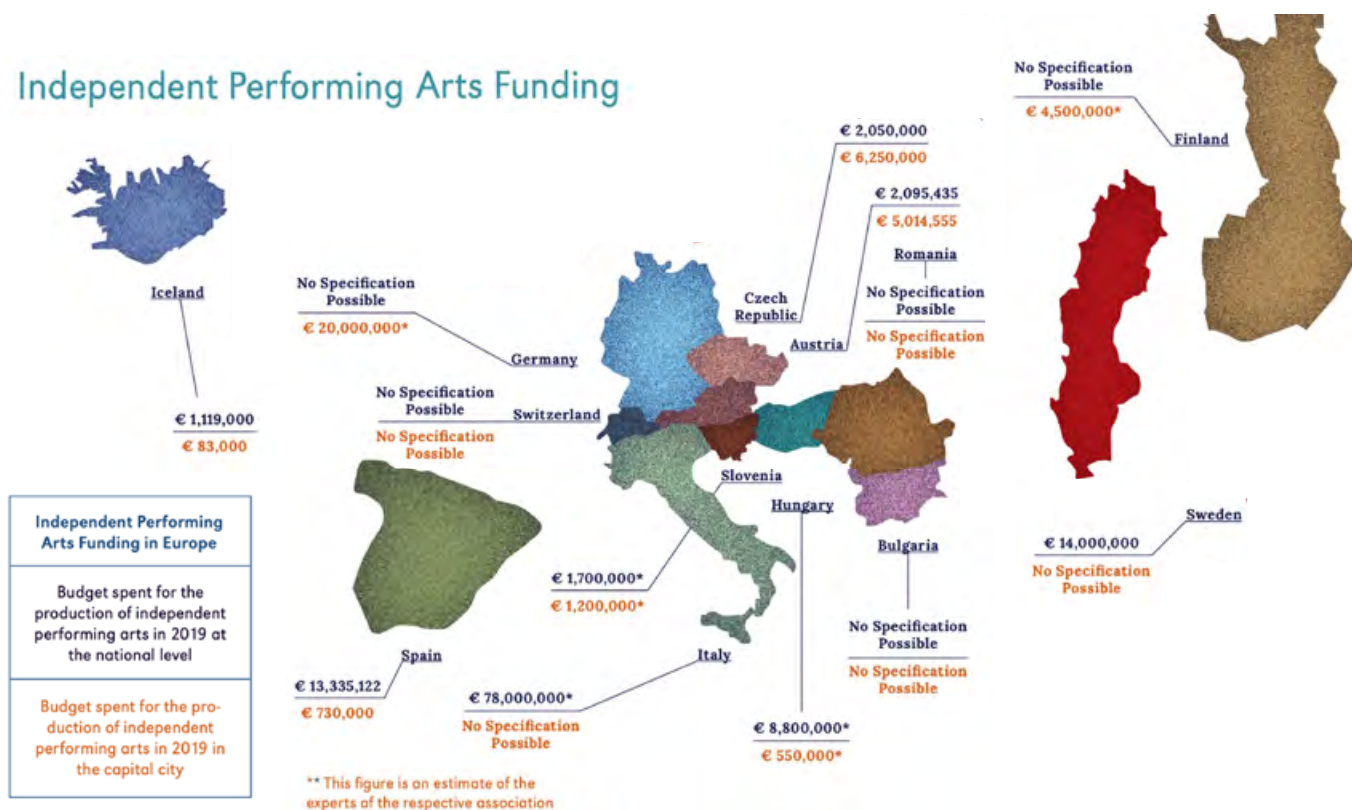
In all portrayed countries, the experts report that funding does not cover demand. With budgets too low to fund the high-quality work appropriately, the results are either an absence of proper coverage of social risks or the work simply doesn't get produced at all. When looking into the funding tools available in the different countries, Thomas F. Eder found that in Germany, Austria or Switzerland, funding tools are designed around the communities' needs, including the multitude of aims, different career stages or degree of professionalism. When looking into funding that supports long-term planning (for one year or more) for artists, he found that six out of thirteen countries do not provide any support at all.

Without any sufficient long-term funding, the sector cannot produce regularly, build sustainable structures or careers or cooperate internationally and is forced to perpetuate a vicious circle of self-exploitation, precariousness and deferment of plans to secure a future in retirement age.

Advocacy & Dialogue



Independent Performing Arts Funding



Cautiously optimistic

Despite the many shortcomings described in Eder's presentation, some EAIPA members who joined the online event were also able to report a few positive developments in their respective countries. It seems that the pandemic has set the ball rolling in some northern and western European countries, and the overall framework has undergone some change even within a year. Lena Gustafsson from Teatercentrum in Sweden reported an improved dialogue with policy makers as well as an increase in funding. Stefan Prohorov from ACT association in Bulgaria also reported an improvement in political relations that resulted in the construction of a new independent performing arts centre, as well as an increase in production and an influx of new artists to the field of independent performing arts. Although positive developments could only be recorded in some parts of the continent, it will still be interesting to compare this brochure's findings with its follow-up in two years' time.

In the meantime, EAIPA will keep on monitoring, advocating and sharing best practice models so the independent performing arts can thrive. Ulrike Kuner (EAIPA president) used this opportunity to invite all participating guests to join EAIPA's upcoming event:

„WALK THE LINE - FAIRNESS FOR THE INDEPENDENT PERFORMING ARTS IN EUROPE“, a hybrid conference examining fairness processes in the context of the independent performing arts, which will take place as a live & online event in Vienna on March 25th 2022.

Esther Baio

Independent Performing Arts Funding



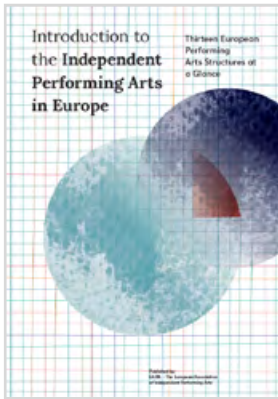
Municipal Funding Programs		Austria	Bulgaria	Czech Republic	Finland	Germany	Hungary	Iceland	Italy	Romania	Slovenia	Spain	Sweden	Switzerland
International Mobility Funding														
National Mobility Funding														
Funding of New Comers														
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Thomas Fabian Eder is a researcher at the Department of Theatre Studies at Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich. Through his former occupation as an independent arts manager in the field of international distribution of performing arts in Europe, he was actively involved in the founding of EAIPA and continues to be in close contact with members of the umbrella association.

His occupational change was caused by the effects of the coronavirus pandemic and can be seen as representative of what is happening to the field of independent performing arts at the moment.

Thomas F. Eder is currently carrying out a study in association with the research group "Krisengefüge der Künste - institutionelle Transformationsdynamiken in den darstellenden Künsten der Gegenwart". This study is scheduled to be published at the beginning of 2023.



“Introduction to the Independent Performing Arts in Europe – Thirteen Performing Arts Structures at a Glance“

was published in autumn 2021 and is the second and updated edition of a previous publication from 2019. The research compares the performing arts communities from Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Rumania, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Switzerland and thus provides insight into the socio-economic situation of performing arts professionals throughout Europe and the possibility of a direct comparison of the different ways in which the independent

performing arts field operates in different European countries. The brochure is intended as a practice guidebook, presenting preliminary results of Thomas F. Eder's extensive ongoing research in an accessible and non-scientific manner.

With the goal of observing the framework conditions for the independent performing arts in various European countries and regularly informing the public, EAIPA has set itself the goal to publish a revised brochure as a regular monitoring tool every two years.

The brochure is available for download on EAIPA's website: eaipa.eu/publications/

Anzeige



Patrizia Reidl; Foto © Barbara Herbst

WERK X-PETERSPLATZ GOES INSTAWALK

Alles neu macht der Frühling! Mit März 2022 starten wir in Kooperation mit IgersAustria eine Reihe von InstaWalks für unser fotoaffines Publikum und jene, die es noch werden wollen.

Im Fokus unserer InstaWalks stehen exklusive Zugänge zu einer aktuellen Produktion und damit Hintergrundinformationen und Geschichte zu den Stückthematiken im Vordergrund. Die Umgebung des Petersplatz 1 wird dabei in die Dramaturgie der InstaWalks miteinbezogen.

Eine Gruppe von 15 Teilnehmer*innen wird rund um das Theater an relevante Stationen von der staatlich geprüften Fremdenführerin Patrizia Reidl geführt. Die InstaWalk erfahrene Public Communications Expertin Birgit Wagner wiederum sorgt mit Tipps und Tricks dafür, dass der gemeinsame Fotospaziergang auch optisch bestens eingefangen wird.

DER INSTAWALK AM SONNTAG, 24. APRIL WIDMET SICH PASSEND ZUR URAUFFÜHRUNG VON „DAS ZIGARETTENREICH (JEDER TRAUM HAT EIN ENDE)“ VON MARC CARNAL GEHEIMEN ORTEN IM 1. BEZIRK.

AM SAMSTAG, 14. MAI FÜHRT UNS DER INSTAWALK IN DEN PRATER, DER AUCH ZENTRALE BEDEUTUNG IM STÜCK VON BERNHARD BILEK „TRÜMMERHERZ“ HAT.

Im Anschluss besteht jeweils die Möglichkeit, sich (kostenlos) die Aufführungen im WERK X-Petersplatz anzuschauen.

HARD FACTS #werkxpetersplatz #instawalk

TERMINE: 24.04.2022 „Secret Places“ | 14.05.2022 „Praterleben“ | Beginn jeweils 17.00 Uhr

TEILNAHME: kostenlos; Anmeldung erforderlich unter reservierung@werk-x-petersplatz.at

VORAUSSETZUNGEN: eigener Instagram-Account, fotofähiges Handy, Kleidung, die der Witterung entspricht, Neugierde

START: 24.04.: WERK X-Petersplatz, Petersplatz 1 | 14.05.: Prater, Details bei der Anmeldung

ENDE: jeweils WERK X-Petersplatz

DAUER: ca. 2,5 Stunden (ohne Vorstellungsbuchung)

