

From Shortage to Sustainability: Collaborative Leadership in Music Teacher Education

Across Europe, the shortage of qualified music teachers is becoming a pressing challenge that threatens access to music education and, with it, the cultural, social, and economic value that music brings to society. Many schools struggle to recruit and retain qualified music teachers, leading to cancelled lessons, reduced provision, or reliance on non-specialist staff. The consequences are clear: diminished opportunities for young people to engage with music, widening inequities in access, and growing uncertainty about the future of the musical talent pipeline.

This session will examine the shortage not as an isolated workforce issue but as the result of interconnected structural, political, and economic factors. Low remuneration, precarious employment, and administrative barriers discourage new entrants and drive attrition. At the same time, competing curricular priorities, funding pressures, and insufficient policy attention marginalise music within education systems. These conditions combine to weaken the attractiveness and sustainability of music teaching as a profession.

The focus of the discussion will be on identifying constructive solutions. How can remuneration and working conditions be reformed to make the profession more viable? What political strategies are needed to secure music's place in teacher training? How can education systems and stakeholders collaborate to modernise recruitment, teacher education, and career pathways? By addressing these questions, the session seeks to generate a shared advocacy agenda for strengthening music education in Europe, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to experience the transformative power of music.

With:

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