



Association Européenne des
Conservatoires, Académies de
Musique et Musikhochschulen

Annual report 2025

Members, activities, policies

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About the AEC annual report 2025

This report aims to outline the different areas of AEC's work in 2025, explaining the Association's activities, discussions, developments and events.

This Report is available for downloading in PDF-format from the Publications section of the AEC website (www.aec-music.eu).

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1. Message from the President

2025 has been a defining year for the Association of European Conservatoires (AEC). Across our network of over 315 higher music education institutions in 57 countries, we have seen renewed commitment to collaboration, inclusion, artistic innovation, and the strengthening of music's role in society. The pages that follow reflect an organisation working confidently at the intersection of culture, education and policy, and preparing for an ambitious new cycle of European cooperation.

A major highlight of the year was the launch of our new Creative Europe Network project for 2025-2028, which positions the AEC to play a leading role in addressing music and the performing arts cultural, digital, and societal challenges. This project builds upon the achievements of the ARTEMIS project (2022-2025) and affirms our sector's responsibility to drive social cohesion, artistic innovation, sustainability, and diversity in an increasingly complex landscape.

The new funding cycle also brings a renewed structure to our Working Groups, (See Chapters 2. One Strategy One Structure and 8. People).

Our work in advocacy has continued to gather momentum throughout the year. AEC has remained a vocal presence in European conversations about cultural policy. These advocacy efforts remain central to our mission: to ensure that the needs and realities of higher music education are heard at the highest levels.

Another sign of AEC's vitality is the increasing participation in our events. From the Congress, to the European Platform for Artistic Research in Music (EPARM), Pop and Jazz Platform and International Coordinators Annual Meeting, event numbers continued to rise in 2025, demonstrating the network's commitment to shared learning and artistic exchange.

The AEC's publication output also expanded, with new resources supporting innovation, sustainability, curriculum development, and the digital transformation of music education. These include the ARTEMIS Outputs Brochure, new roadmaps for digitisation, and policy papers designed to guide conservatoires through the challenges and opportunities ahead.

Taken together, these achievements speak to an AEC that is future-facing, confident and united. Our community continues to model what higher music education can be: global in outlook, responsive to society, rooted in artistic excellence, and unwavering in its belief that music and the performing arts are central to Europe and the world's cultural identity.

As President, I am deeply grateful to all our members - institutions, teachers, students, partners and colleagues - for your dedication and your trust. The work we do together shapes not only our conservatoires, but the cultural fabric of society itself.

Deborah Kelleher, AEC President

2. One Strategy, One Structure

How AEC's new Creative Europe project supports the implementation of the AEC Strategy 2030

2025 marked the beginning of a new four-year Creative Europe Network project for the AEC.

This time, AEC chose not to create a separate project and management structure, but to use this framework as an integrated operational instrument for advancing the priorities of European Higher Music Education and implementing the AEC Strategy 2030.

The project's objectives and deliverables therefore directly reflect AEC's strategic priorities: strengthening the societal relevance of Higher Music Education, supporting Learning & Teaching and digital transformation, promoting sustainability and well-being, fostering diversity, equity and inclusion. The framework also supports AEC's commitments to international collaboration, artistic research, student empowerment and lifelong learning.

Similarly, the project is fully integrated into the organisation's day-to-day operations, with leadership and coordination embedded within the existing structures of the AEC Council and Office. Working group coordination, reporting, communication and dissemination are therefore carried out as part of AEC's regular activities, avoiding duplication and ensuring close alignment between project implementation and strategic development.

Within this framework, four thematic working groups were established:

- Education & Profession Working Group;
- Music, Society & Sustainability Working Group;
- Special Education Needs (SEN) Working Group;
- Digitisation Working Group.

Together with standing AEC Working Groups and Task Forces, these groups address key sector priorities including employability, accessibility, inclusion, sustainability and technological transformation.

AEC also launched several stakeholder networks to strengthen peer learning and institutional cooperation across Europe:

- Network of Green and Environmental Sustainability Officers;
- Network of Communication Officers.

Further networks will be launched during 2026, including a Network on Health and Well-being and a Digital Transformation Stakeholder Network. Together, these platforms support the exchange of expertise, practices and long-term sector development across the European Higher Music Education community in parallel to the AEC annual events.

An important development in 2025 was the adoption of the AEC Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy 2030. The policy was developed to ensure that principles of diversity, equity and inclusion are visibly and consistently embedded in AEC's organisational culture, governance and decision-making processes. Closely aligned with both the AEC Strategy 2030 and the objectives of the Creative Europe Programme, the policy provides strategic guidance on inclusive recruitment, equitable participation, communication practices, training, data collection, transparency and community engagement.

Particular attention has been given to ensuring fair and welcoming participation in AEC working groups, Council structures and project activities, while also encouraging critical reflection on questions of representation, power and privilege within the sector.

AEC was also pleased to continue its close collaboration with the European Performing Arts Students' Association - EPASA. AEC provided administrative and financial support to the organisation, and the EPASA representatives took part in Council meetings throughout the year, organised in person in March and online in September.

3. Environmental sustainability

Environmental sustainability also remained a central priority throughout 2025. AEC continued to strengthen its role as a driver of sustainable transformation within the cultural and educational sectors and implemented a broad range of green actions during the year, presented below.

AEC is dedicated to reducing its ecological footprint, implementing sustainable practices, and serving as a model of environmental responsibility for our members and other cultural networks. There are some of the actions aimed at reducing our environmental impact, taken in 2025:

- AEC received the SHIFT eco-certificate for cultural networks after implementing the SHIFT Eco-Guidelines. It is designed to reinforce environmental responsibility and contribute to more inclusive, sustainable, and future-oriented institutions;
- AEC collected and published [Sustainable practices at the AEC events](#). These gathered examples could serve as inspiration to the future AEC event hosts and raise awareness on AEC green efforts;
- Building on AEC's broader sustainability journey and promoting greener travel choices to attend AEC events, the AEC launched the Green Travel Incentive, AEC's pilot initiative to support green travel for AEC IRCs and Congress 2025. This initiative encouraged and normalised low-carbon travel, such as by train, bus, or shared mobility, as a sustainable alternative to air travel;
- The Climate Salon, organised during the AEC Congress 2025, provided practical tools, group work, and shared examples to support the green transition in higher music education. Participants explored the link with sustainable practices inspired by the Play Green! recommendations, explored the link between climate and well-being, as well as worked together to draft a green policy, exchange ideas, and determine their environmental priorities;
- AEC issued a call to the AEC membership to join the Network of Environmental Sustainability Officers (i.e. Green Officers) to create a space for learning, exchange, and mutual support, and to explore ways of contributing to the Green shift through institutional operations and curriculum development. The first meeting will take place in April 2026;
- AEC updated its Sustainability Action Plan to be up to date with our goals and objectives for 2025;
- AEC continued issuing the Green news bi-annual newsletter to keep the AEC membership informed on the latest developments related to environmental sustainability.

4. Advocacy

Throughout 2025, AEC strengthened its advocacy at European and international level during a decisive period for culture, education, research and EU funding. Against the backdrop of geopolitical instability, budget reform, digital transformation and growing pressure on democratic values, AEC worked to ensure that Higher Music Education Institutions were recognised as essential contributors to Europe's cultural life, social cohesion, innovation and democratic resilience.

A central focus was the development of the European Commission's new Culture Compass, intended to guide EU cultural policy in the coming years. AEC contributed actively through sector consultations, meetings with European partners and dialogue with the Commission. The final framework placed unprecedented emphasis on the relationship between culture and education, recognising that arts and cultural education strengthen creativity, critical thinking, civic engagement, and well-being.

AEC also worked intensively on the next Multiannual Financial Framework 2028–2034 (MFF), defending the programmes most vital to members: Creative Europe, Erasmus+ and Horizon Europe. AEC advocated for Creative Europe to remain visible and sufficiently funded, for Erasmus+ to become more inclusive and better financed, and for Horizon Europe to continue recognising artistic research as a legitimate field of knowledge and innovation. Through consultations, campaign participation, European Parliament events and cooperation with partners, AEC helped keep the interests of cultural and educational institutions on the political agenda.

The Commission's budget proposal brought positive signals, including increased funding for Erasmus+, Horizon Europe and the future cultural funding framework. However, AEC also warned that simplified and merged funding structures could expose culture to unfair competition from larger policy areas. AEC therefore continued to call for a robust, accessible and ambitious EU budget, including stronger support for mobility, artistic

research, cultural cooperation and fair conditions for cultural professionals.

As negotiations on the MFF continue in 2026, AEC, together with its partners, will continue its efforts over the coming year to ensure the best possible financial and legislative framework for culture and education at the European level.

Internally, 2025 marked a major step in AEC's own advocacy capacity. Building on the ARTEMIS project, AEC developed an advocacy strategy and toolkit, which helped clarify priorities and strengthen communication. Following conclusions from a Council consultation, AEC has prioritised topics such as access to music education, sustainable funding, artistic freedom, and student empowerment, and the integration of the arts into STEAM education.

AEC also intensified its work on artistic freedom and cultural rights. Through participation in the European Forum for Music and the Open Culture conference in Bratislava, AEC underlined that artistic freedom is a cornerstone of democratic society. AEC supported calls for stronger monitoring of artistic freedom in Europe, including within the EU Rule of Law framework, and continued to defend cultural diversity and freedom of artistic expression as core conditions for higher music education.

At global level, AEC represented the higher music education sector at UNESCO's MONDIACULT 2025 conference in Barcelona. The conference reinforced many of AEC's priorities, including culture as a public good, the right to participate in cultural life, arts education, responsible use of AI, cultural diversity and culture's role in peacebuilding and sustainable development.

5. Events

Pop and Jazz Platform (PJP) Meeting

“Mother Tongue: European Identities in Heritage, Pedagogy, and Repertoire”

150 participants
20 countries represented
25 sessions
25 speakers

Hosted by Conservatorio Superior de Música de Navarra 27 February - 02 March 2025, Pamplona (Spain)

The AEC Pop and Jazz Platform (PJP) 2025 took place at the Conservatorio Superior de Música de Navarra (CSMN) in Pamplona (Spain) from 27 February to 2 March 2025, under the title “Mother Tongue: European Identities in Heritage, Pedagogy, and Repertoire”.

The 150 participants enjoyed the usual mix of practical workshops, keynote speeches, open floor sessions, on-stage conversations, discussion groups and networking.

For more information on this event, please check the [2025 PJP Meeting report](#).



European Platform for Artistic Research in Music (EPARM)

more than 180 participants
23 countries represented
33 sessions
50 speakers

Hosted by Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre in Tallinn 03 – 05 April, Tallinn, Estonia

The European Platform for Artistic Research in Music (EPARM) held its 12th edition at the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre in Tallinn (Estonia) on 3 – 5 April 2025. The event was attended by over 180 participants from 23 countries. The conference provided numerous opportunities for attendees with diverse backgrounds and expertise to engage in stimulating discussions, network and exchange novel ideas and approaches of artistic research in music.

The conference sparked discussions about key topics such as the ethics of artistic practice and Artistic Research, Artistic Research that draws on different musical fields or contexts or how Artistic Research relates to artistic agency among others.

For more information on this event, please check the [2025 EPARM report](#).



Annual Meeting for International Relations Coordinators (IRCs)

The Great Mobility Compass: Exploration, Navigation, and Direction in the Future of Internationalisation.

more than 240 participants
40 countries represented
17 sessions
60 speakers

Hosted by the Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest 17 – 20 September, Budapest, Hungary

The AEC Annual Meeting for International Relations Coordinators (IRCs) 2025 took place in September at the Liszt Academy of Music in Budapest (Hungary), bringing together more than 240 participants. The event took place from 17 to 20 September.

The 4-day in-person event provided opportunities to learn and grow as well as network. As the landscape of higher music education and mobility continues to evolve, this year's meeting invited participants to pause, reflect, and recalibrate their direction. Designed by a renewed IRC working group, the programme offered an engaging blend of technical insight, strategic dialogue, and community exchange.

For more information on this event, please check the [2025 IRC Meeting report](#).



52nd Annual Congress and General Assembly

The sound of Future Music Education: Leadership, Innovation, Wellbeing

468 participants

46 countries represented

40 sessions

100 speakers

Hosted by the Mozarteum University
05 – 08 November 2025, Salzburg, Austria

The AEC Congress and General Assembly 2025 took place at Mozarteum Salzburg 05-08 November 2025.

This year's Congress drew about 470 in-person participants from 46 countries. The event featured not only keynote speakers belonging to higher music education institutions as well as the cultural and creative sector but also interactive workshops, and networking sessions. Across 4 days, over 100 speakers contributed to more than 40 sessions, in the format of the usual mix of workshops, plenaries and panels.

The programme included topics such as quality enhancement, international collaborations, student involvement, diversity and inclusion, power relations, digitisation, artistic excellence, pre-college music education, environmental and mental sustainability, lifelong learning, curriculum development and artistic research.

For more information on this event, please check the [2025 Annual Congress report](#).



6. AEC involvement in projects

Projects supported by Erasmus+

HarMA HUB (2023–2026)

HarMA Hub, led by the Conservatoire royal de Bruxelles, focuses on the exchange of practices in music theory courses through digital means. 2025 marked as an important year for the project, with the Harma Seminar in Valencia and with the launch of the project's [website](#) with digital tools, such as a glossary, compilation of bibliography, analyses, and more.



TEAM – Teacher Education Academy for Music (2023–2026)

Coordinated by the European Association for Music in Schools (EAS), 'TEAM -Teacher Education Academy for Music aims to strengthen the network for music education in schools, to ensure lifelong learning for classroom teachers and to foster mobility and provide future-making material for music education.



The project involves both AEC and the [SCHEME \(Steering Committee for the Harmonisation of European Music Education\)](#) consortium as partners. More information can be found [here](#).

MUSENSE – Music Higher Education meets the Cyber Dimension (2022–2025)



Led by the Conservatorio di Musica Statale A. Scarlatti, Palermo, the project aims at equipping music HEI students with additional expertise, in particular digital skills. Based on the analysis of already existing models of good practice, of innovative forms of cyber and distance performances, IT and cyber practices in music performance as well as in educational settings, new forms and models of learning and teaching are developed.

In 2025, the final outputs including many articles were published and a final dissemination event took place in Palermo, Italy. More information on MUSENSE can be found [here](#).

IncluMusic – Increasing skills for building more inclusive conservatoires (2022–2025)

The project, coordinated by Academia Națională de Muzică Gheorghe Dima in Cluj-Napoca, aims at fostering the inclusion of students with Special Education Needs (SEN) and disadvantaged backgrounds in HME. IncluMusic supports music teachers and administrative staff to increase access, participation and completion rates of music students with fewer opportunities.



In 2025, the project published a training toolkit, [IncluMusic](#), a free, self-paced online training course designed specifically for teachers, tutors, lecturers, and administrative staff working with students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and neurodivergent profiles in HME. The final dissemination event, titled 'Music and Inclusion: Educate, Empower, Engage', took place with great success in Cluj-Napoca, Romania.

IN.TUNE

IN.TUNE ('Innovative Universities in Music & Arts in Europe) is the first European University Alliance in the field of music and arts. It brings together eight universities from North, East, South and West Europe striving to deepen their cooperation to bring about institutional transformation and the enhancement of their quality, performance, attractiveness and international competitiveness. IN.TUNE members are committed to the development of a joint long-term strategy with a strong artistic dimension for high quality education, research, innovation and service to society. AEC is one of the 19 associated partners making sure that the AEC community as a whole may benefit from the project outcomes. More information can be found [here](#).



VIETMUS – VIETnam Music Universities Spurring (2023 – 2025)

VIETMUS (Vietnamese higher education music system matches employability) is an Erasmus+ KA2 Capacity building project aimed at promoting digital transformation and developing new digital capacities in teaching and performance, with the ultimate goal of enhancing the employability of graduates within the Vietnamese HME landscape.



The project, led by the Conservatorio di Musica A. Scarlatti in Palermo, involves partners from Belgium, Turkey, and six universities in Vietnam. In 2025, the event *VIETMUS Musichathon: a hands-on laboratory on digital tools and remote music performance* took place from 25 to 30 March in Hanoi for an immersive programme focused on training sessions about new methodologies and performance possibilities. The event brought together experts, educators and students from Vietnam and Europe. For more information, please click [here](#).

Projects supported by Creative Europe

FAMES (2022–2025)

The FAMES project is led by the FAME's institute dedicated to perform and record orchestral music with a main focus on unconventional settings. The project addresses highly skilled young musicians in the field of orchestral music and focuses on giving the opportunity to participate in masterclasses, various orchestral practices, exploring new repertoires and performance styles (including music for film, media and gaming, crossover, digital components etc).



FAMES provides both orchestra courses and masterclasses with renown teachers, mentors and conductors and has access to a studio for orchestral music recordings. AEC's role is primarily to provide contacts and publicise the project idea among its members. More information on FAMES can be found [here](#).

1000+ Concerts: Innovating Higher Music Education Through Social Inclusion (2024-2027)

1000+ Concerts is an innovative four-year initiative led by Musethica. It brings together European partners to transform higher music education through social inclusion and community focused performance.



AEC contributes to the project as partner for communication and dissemination, providing external project evaluation and participation in the Sustainability and Accreditation Steering Group. More information can be found [here](#).

Opera Out of Opera 2 (2022–2025)

OOO2 is led by Conservatorio di Musica Santa Cecilia in Rome, together with partners from Austria, Norway, France, Ukraine, Portugal and Belgium. The project aims at reaching out to new audiences for opera, with special attention to younger generations. A total of 5 operas have been selected for the itinerant and on-demand performances. In 2025, performances took place in Monheim, Salzburg and Oslo. The operas were reduced and counted on a coherent narrative and an overall concept, adapted according to the different creative teams. Immersive rooms have been created to enhance the experience of the audience. A final project partner meeting took place in Brussels, hosted by the AEC.



The project has also set up official communication channels on social media to strengthen audience engagement with the young public, where regular content and social storytelling campaigns prior to the performances have been taking place. Further activities and project outcomes can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

Sustainable-EEEMERGING (2023-2027)

Boosting the sustainability of young artist career and of organisations in Early Music is a large-scale Creative Europe cooperation project meant to support the transition of the Early Music sector towards a more sustainable ecosystem by empowering all actors in the value chain to achieve meaningful outcomes. AEC is an associated partner involved in promotion and dissemination.



More information can be found [here](#).



Projects supported by Horizon Europe

Dialoguing@rts (d@rts) (2024-2027)

dialoguing@rts (d@rts) explores how performing arts: music, dance, and drama, can foster cultural literacy, inclusion, and social cohesion across diverse communities. Bringing together 11 partners from Europe, Uganda, and Aotearoa/New Zealand, the project works across formal and non-formal education settings to reimagine cultural literacy as a dialogical and participatory practice.



The AEC leads the project's communication, dissemination, and exploitation activities. This included the development and implementation of a comprehensive communication strategy, the launch and maintenance of the project's online presence, and coordination of consortium-wide outreach.

The AEC also supports visibility efforts through social media, newsletter creation, audience engagement, and storytelling, helping ensure that the values and impact of d@rts reached practitioners, educators, policymakers, and wider publics across Europe and beyond. More information can be found [here](#).

Other projects and networks in which AEC is involved

WoCE – Winds of Central Europe

WoCE is a [CEEPUS](#) funded project network addressing Balkan and Vishegrad countries under the leadership of Liszt Academy Budapest. It allows partner institutions to bring students together from different countries to do bundled short term chamber ensemble workshops. It's a one-year-project, but has been renewed annually so far. AEC is a silent partner helping to disseminate and make contacts. More information about Winds of Central Europe can be found [here](#).

Erasmus Orchestra by INDIRE, the Italian Erasmus Agency

[The Erasmus Orchestra](#) is a musical ensemble, unique in its kind, made up of students of Conservatories and Music institutes that participated or are taking part in an Erasmus international mobility experience. The Orchestra is an initiative undertaken by the Erasmus+ Italian National Agency (INDIRE – National Institute for Documentation, Innovation and Educational Research). This pilot project is based on the idea of a travelling ensemble which, thanks to the universal language of music and art, could represent the value of a common European identity that resonates in harmony.



The AEC supported this initiative by sending out to all its members a Call for Interest for the period 2023/2025. The call was answered by 200 students from 60 Higher Music Education Institutions in Europe. The orchestra performed at the IRC Meeting 2025 in September in Budapest.

IartNET (2025 – 2026) – NRRP Italy | NextGenerationEU Programme

IartNET is an international platform for artistic practice/research and cultural heritage at Italian higher arts education institutions funded by the PNRR Italia (National Recovery and Resilience Plan). It aims to strengthen the internationalization of Italian Higher Arts and Music Education (AFAM) institutions by fostering transnational cooperation grounded in connectivity, experimentation, innovation, and diversity. Designed as a system-wide project, IartNET operates through collaborative networks to generate shared benefits across the AFAM sector.



In 2025, AEC started planning its contribution to the definition and organization of an international three-day workshop in January 2026, hosted by the Conservatorio “L. Marenzio” in Brescia, and to the development of an International Hub for Artistic Research by organizing 5 webinars on artistic research. More information can be found [here](#).

ROLE (2025 – 2026) – NRRP Italy | NextGenerationEU Programme

ROLE (Reimagining Opera Learning & Education) is a project led by the Conservatorio di Musica Cesare Pollini in Padua, Italy, and funded by the PNRR Italy.



The project brings together the digitisation of 18th-century opera manuscripts and the production of a film-opera based on Mozart’s *Così fan tutte*. These two strands aim to preserve and revitalise musical heritage by enhancing access to historic materials and reimagining opera through innovative, contemporary formats.

All communication and dissemination activities are coordinated by the AEC. More information can be found [here](#).

MUSIC4D (2025-2026) - NRRP Italy | NextGenerationEU Programme

MUSIC4D (Music, entrepreneurship, Creativity, For the Digital revolution) is a forward-thinking project focusing on integrating digital technologies, interdisciplinary collaboration, and new pedagogical approaches into music education and research.



Led by the Conservatorio di Musica Alessandro Scarlatti in Palermo, Italy, and funded by the PNRR Italia, the project is part of the wider strategy to modernise and internationalise the AFAM system and also aims to empower the new generation of musicians to become cultural actors in a connected and sustainable world.

The AEC leads the project's communication, dissemination, and exploitation activities. More information can be found [here](#).

7. Communication and services

In 2025, AEC strengthened its communication across all channels: growing its social media presence, keeping its community informed through a thriving newsletter, and launching the Comms Exchange, a new peer-learning space for communication professionals across the network.

Social media - Reaching further, growing faster

AEC is present on social media to connect with its audience, build trust, and drive meaningful engagement. Through these platforms, AEC has continued to amplify its voice and increase its visibility across the higher music education sector and beyond. The growth in traffic and followers throughout 2025 is in line with the implementation of the AEC Communication Strategy 2025–2030.

Newsletter - Keeping the community informed

The AEC monthly newsletter continued to be a key communication tool in 2025, growing steadily throughout the year. It kept the community informed with regular updates on advocacy and policy developments, news from AEC projects and initiatives, and highlights from member institutions. It also featured calls for proposals, event announcements, and opportunities for engagement alongside resources relevant to higher music education.

Comms Exchange - A new space for peer learning

The AEC Comms Exchange is a new peer-learning initiative launched as part of the AEC's Creative Europe network project. It brings together communication and administrative professionals from across the AEC membership to share knowledge, strategies, and practices in a supportive, collegial environment. Through short, practical sessions held every five to six months, the Exchange aims to help staff build confidence and communication competence, even with limited time and resources.

Most discussed topics

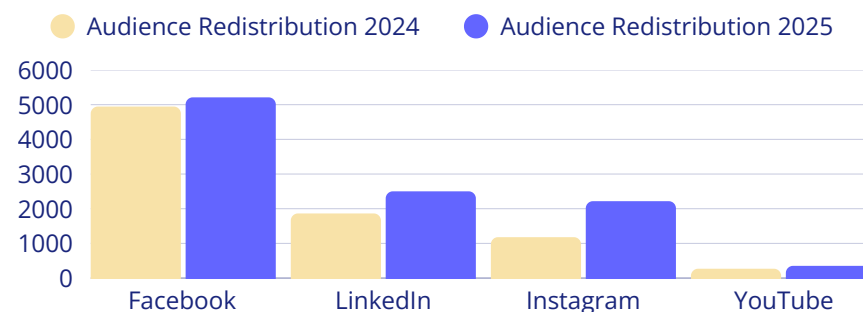
AI and technology, inclusive language, crisis communication, audience mapping

Daily challenges raised

Internal comms, limited resources, channel selection, external messaging decisions

Future session interests

Crisis comms, ethical AI, internal planning, bridging HME with public audiences



Services

Vacancy Platform

Around **100** vacancies were posted.



EASY MO – European Online Application System for Mobility

In 2024, EASY started to be officially hosted by the Austrian IT company SoP Mobility Online. Since January, 92 institutions joined the system as internal institutions.



Coordination of Institutional Networks (METRIC)



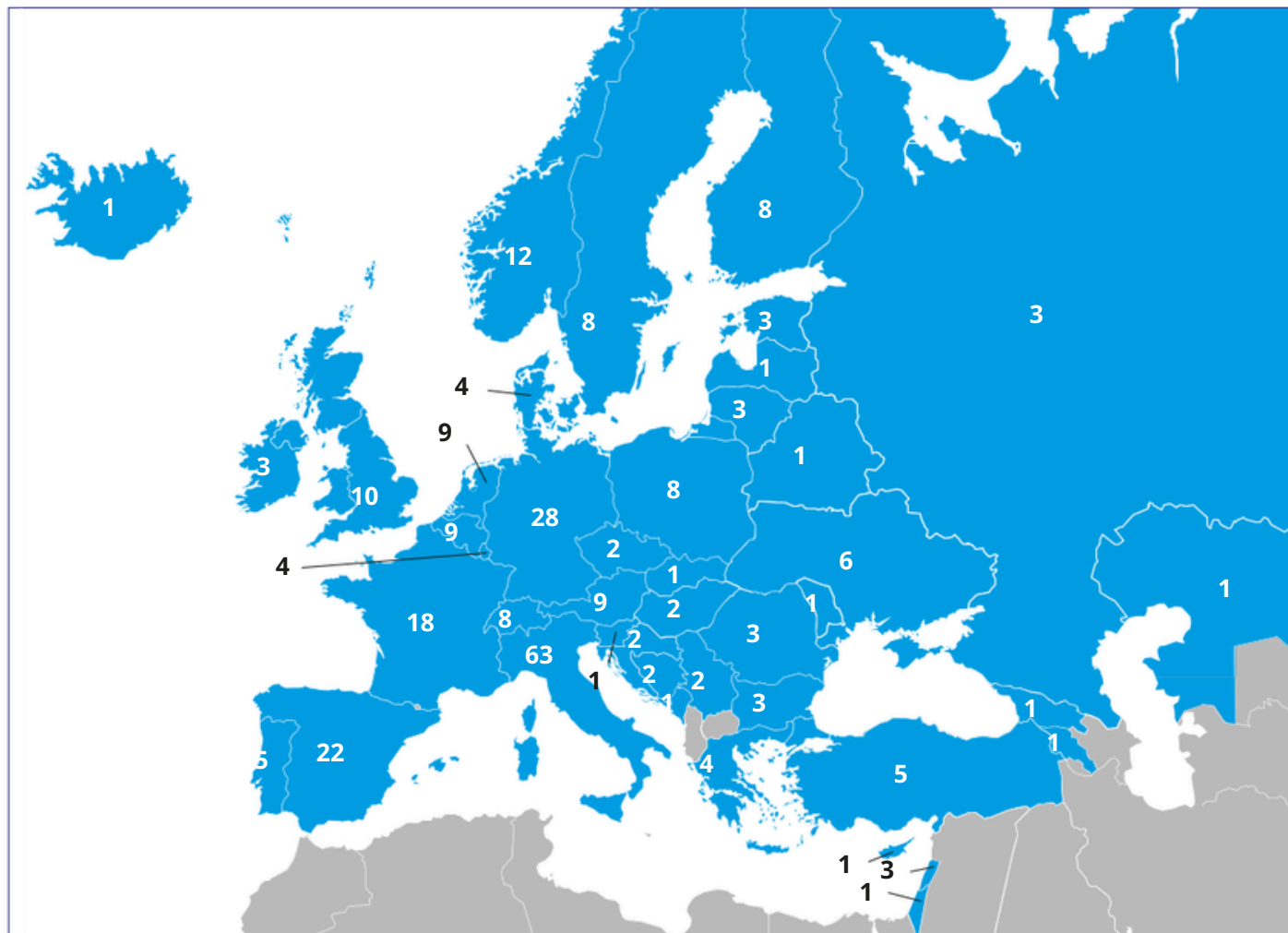
AEC serves as coordinator of the METRIC network.

METRIC focuses on the modernisation of higher music education through intensive international cooperation in the field of improvisation. Through a continuous process of mutual enrichment, METRIC wants to support the development and improvement of improvisation teaching, performance and research. Every year, one of the member institutions of the METRIC Network hosts an Intensive Programme (IP): five full days of workshops and masterclasses on improvisation. In 2024, over 30 students and 20 teachers came together for the sixth edition of the METRIC Intensive Programme (IP) at the Royal Conservatoire Antwerp in Belgium. The event aims to enhance curriculum development and foster cooperation in the field of improvisation.

For more information on METRIC, please [click here](#).

8. Members

AEC members



AEC also has members in: Australia (5), Canada (4), China (5), Egypt (1), Hong Kong (1), Singapore (1), South Korea (1), Thailand (2), United Arab Emirates (1) and USA (9).

Total: 314 members

Armenia 1	Latvia 1
Australia 5	Lebanon 3
Austria 9	Lithuania 3
Belarus 1 (frozen)	Luxembourg 4
Belgium 9	Moldova 1
Bosnia and Herzegovina 2	Montenegro 1
Bulgaria 3	Netherlands 9
Canada 4	Norway 12
China 5	Poland 8
Croatia 2	Portugal 5
Cyprus 1	Romania 3
Czech Republic 2	Russia 3 (frozen)
Denmark 4	Serbia 2
Egypt 1	Singapore 1
Estonia 3	Slovakia 1
Finland 8	Slovenia 1
France 18	South Korea 1
Georgia 1	Spain 22
Germany 28	Sweden 8
Greece 4	Switzerland 8
Hong Kong 1	Thailand 2
Hungary 2	Turkey 5
Iceland 1	UAE 1
Ireland 3	UK 10
Israel 1	Ukraine 6
Italy 63	USA 9
Kazakhstan 2	

New members

In 2025, the AEC welcomed several new members, reaching a community of 314 institutions (271 Active members and 43 Associate members), marking the record within the AEC community to date.

The following institutions have been accepted as **Active Members**:

- Conservatorio Antonio Buzzolla in Adria (Italy);
- Accademia Nazionale del Jazz in Siena (Italy);
- Hochschule für Musik Mainz (Germany);
- H. S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University (Ukraine).

The following institutions have been re-admitted:

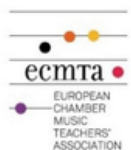
- Conservatorio Lorenzo Perosi in Campobasso (Italy);
- Université Antonine (Lebanon);
- Manhattan School of Music (USA);
- Communication University of Zhejiang (China).

The following institutions have been accepted as **Associate Members**:

- Chinese University of Hong Kong (China);
- Sharjah Performing Arts Academy (UAE);
- Rice University, Shepherd School of Music (USA).



AEC partner organisations



AEC membership



9. People

Finally, AEC would like to highlight the work of the different people involved and thank them for making 2025 a successful year.

Council Members

The year 2025 brought several changes to the AEC Council. Claire Michon (FR) retired from her position, while Bruno Pereira (PL) decided not to stand for a second term. Following the November General Assembly and Council elections, Sandrine Desmurs (FR) and Vicent Sanchis (ES) were elected to the Council. The AEC President, Vice-President, and Secretary General were re-elected to their respective positions.

President

Deborah Kelleher – Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin, Ireland

Vice-Presidents

Jeffrey Sharkey – Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow, United Kingdom

Elisabeth Gutjahr – Mozarteum University Salzburg, Austria

Secretary General

Ivana Perković – Department of Musicology, Faculty of Music, University of Arts, Belgrade, Serbia

Council Members

Riccardo Ceni – Conservatorio di Musica “Giuseppe Verdi” di Milano, Italy

Małgorzata Sternal – Krzysztof Penderecki Academy of Music, Krakow, Poland

Keld Hosbond – Royal Academy of Music, Aarhus/Aalborg, Denmark

Claire Michon – Pôle Aliénor, Poitiers-Tours, France

Bruno Pereira – ESMAE Porto’s Superior School of Music and Performing Arts, Polytechnic Institute, Portugal

Barbara Maria Willi – Janáček Academy of Performing Arts, Brno, Czechia

Gyula Fekete – Franz Liszt Academy of Music, Budapest, Hungary

Jan Philipp Sprick – Hochschule für Musik und Theater Hamburg, Germany

Abra Bush – (Co-opted Representative of the Associate Members), Jacob School of Music, Indiana University, USA

Anothai Nitibhon – (Co-opted Representative of the Associate Members), Princess Galyani Vadhana Institute of Music, Thailand

Monica Vejgaard – European Performing Arts Students Association (EPASA)

Miranda Harmer – European Performing Arts Students Association (EPASA)



Office Members

Finn Schumacker – Executive Director

Linda Messas – General Manager / Deputy Executive Director

Sara Primiterra – Senior Manager Events and Projects

Alfonso Guerra – Network and Finance Manager

Ashkhen Fixova – Project Manager

Alessandra Callegari – Communication Manager

Beatriz Laborda – Events Manager

Stefan Gies – Senior Advisor

Several trainees supported the association's work throughout the year:

Paloma Pérez (ES), **Lara Martinez** (ES), **Sara Bandinu** (IT), **Sanhita Saha** (IND), **Paola Curci** (IT), **Kiku Kämäläinen** (FI)

After six and a half years of dedicated work in the AEC office, **Alfonso Guerra left** the AEC office and moved back to Spain. We would like to express our sincere gratitude for your committed, high-level work, professionalism, and passion.



Finn Schumacker



Linda Messas



Sara Primiterra



Alfonso Guerra



Beatriz Laborda



Alessandra Callegari



Ashkhen Fixova



Stefan Gies

Working Groups (WGs)

AEC – Creative Europe Network (2025–2028)

AEC Congress Committee

The AEC Congress Committee is in charge of the organisation of AEC Annual Congress. The Committee is comprised of representatives of the AEC Office team, the AEC ExCom as well as the hosting institution.

Deborah Kelleher – Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin, Ireland (AEC President)

Jeffrey Sharkey – Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow, UK (AEC Vice-President)

Małgorzata Sternal – Akademia Muzyczna, Krakow, Poland

Anothai Nitibhon – Princess Galyani Vadhana Institute of Music, Bangkok, Thailand

Elisabeth Gutjahr – Mozarteum University Salzburg (AEC Vice-President and Congress - host)

Natalie Roe – EPASA

Finn Schumacker – AEC Executive Director

Sara Primiterra – AEC Office (Committee Coordinator)

Education and Profession Working Group

Objective: Exploring how to bridge the gap between education and professional practice and advocating for close collaboration with students, student organisations and society stakeholders.

Jan Gerd Kruger – Kielzog, Hoogezand, The Netherlands (WG Chair)

Sorana Santos – Freelance musician/writer, London, UK

Oana Balan-Budoiu – National Academy of Music “Gheorghe Dima”, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Cecile Rongen – HKU Utrecht Conservatorium, The Netherlands

Emá Proso Šepéc – Academy of Music, University of Zagreb, Croatia

Iván Álvarez – Musikene, San Sebastián,

Beatriz Laborda – AEC Office (WG Coordinator)



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Panel of Experts

Objective: Addressing and overcoming imbalances related to gender, ethnicity, socio-economic background and other intersecting dimensions, both within HME institutions and in AEC's daily operations.

Monica Vejgaard – Syddansk Musikkonservatorium, Odense, Denmark

Xiangning Lin – Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, Singapore

Enric Aragonès Jové – Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya, Barcelona, Spain

Jennie Henley – Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester, United Kingdom

Martha Lomeli-Rodriguez – Liverpool John Moores University, United Kingdom

Alfonso Guerra – AEC Office (WG Coordinator)

Music, Society & Sustainability Working Group

Objective: Empowering emerging artists to strengthen and widen participation in active music making and creating, as well as exploring connections between the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and musical creation.

Karolien Dons – Hanze University of Applied Sciences, Groningen, The Netherlands (WG Chair)

Esther Adrian – Hochschule für Musik, Lübeck, Germany

Joris Blanckaert – KASK & Conservatorium, School of arts HOGENT, Ghent, Belgium

Margrethe Langer Bro – The Royal Academy of Music (Aarhus, Denmark) & Danish National Academy of Music

Maria Kalleitner-Huber – Mozarteum University, Salzburg, Austria

Monica Lopez – Hochschule Luzern, Switzerland

Linda Messas – AEC Office (WG Coordinator)



Special Education Needs (SEN) Working Group

Objective: Supporting the development of competences among cultural professionals in HME institutions, strengthening inclusive practices, and establishing a network of institutions committed to social inclusion, fostering collaboration and the exchange of good practices.

Elide Scarlata – Conservatorio Statale di Musica Alessandro Scarlatti, Palermo, Italy (WG Chair)

Maria Prodromou – European University Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus

Melissa Mercadal – Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya, Barcelona, Spain

Kim Fallen Bailey – Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin, Ireland

Beatrice Iordache – National Academy of Music “Gheorghe Dima”, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

Jessica Harris – Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin, Ireland (WG Advisor)

Alfonso Guerra – AEC Office (WG Coordinator)



Building the capacity of the HME sector to train artists as makers in society

AEC-YMTE (Young Music Talent Education) Working Group

Objective: To identify and address gaps between pre-college music education and higher music education through research, stakeholder collaboration, and actionable recommendations that support smoother educational transitions and the development of emerging musical talent.

Mattias Lundqvist – Barratt Due Musikk institutt Oslo, Norway (WG Co-Chair)

Lucia Di Cecca – Conservatorio Statale di Musica Santa Cecilia, Rome, Italy

Balázs Kecskés – Franz Liszt Academy of Music, Budapest, Hungary

Ross Lyness – Royal Irish Academy of Music, Dublin, Ireland

Alf Richard Kraggerud – Barratt Due Institute of Music, Oslo, Norway

Minna-Maria Pesonen – East Helsinki Music Institute, Helsinki, Finland

Mario Zecher – Eberhard-Ludwigs-Gymnasium, Stuttgart, Germany

Finn Schumacker – AEC Office (WG Chair and Coordinator)

SCHEME (Steering Committee for the Harmonisation of European Music Education)

Objective: to develop future-oriented music teacher profiles, innovative access and participation models, and curriculum guidelines that respond to digital transformation and AI, cultural diversity, European cultural citizenship, and contemporary social challenges.

Isolde Malmberg – European Association for Music in Schools (EAS)

Michaela Hahn – European Music School Union (EMU)

Marina Gall – European Association for Music in Schools (EAS)

Till Skoruppa – European Music School Union (EMU)

Jeffrey Sharkey – AEC Vice-President (AEC Executive Committee representative)

Finn Schumacker – AEC Office (WG Chair and Coordinator)



International Relations Coordinators Working Group (IRC)

Objective: The IRC WG coordinates the Annual IRC meeting. It aims to strengthen the cooperation between cultural organisations in both European and non-European countries.

Jan-Gerd Krüger - Prins Claus Conservatorium Groningen, The Netherlands (until September 2025) (WG Chair)

Dimitrios Marinou - Chair, Athens Conservatory, Greece (from September 2025)

Iveri Kekenadze Gustaffson - Malmö Academy of Music, Sweden

Riccardo Mascia - Conservatorio Arrigo Boito Parma, Italy

Anika Stiawa - Kunstuniversität Graz, Austria

Veronika Kuželová - HAMU - Music and Dance Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts, Prague, Czech Republic

Linn Eriksen - UiA - University of Agder, Norway

Sarah Low - Royal Academy of Music, Dublin, Ireland

Ivana Mijanović - Faculty of Music and Arts, Belgrade, Serbia

Junta Arakawa - College of Music, Mahidol University, Thailand

Sara Primiterra - AEC Office (WG Coordinator)



European Platform for Artistic Research in Music (EPARM) Working Group

Objective: The EPARM WG is responsible for organising the AEC Annual EPARM meeting. Its objective is to strengthen the understanding of artistic research as a mean of promoting deeper musical engagement.

Stephen Broad - Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, Glasgow, UK (WG Chair)

Paul Craenen - Royal Conservatoire The Hague, The Netherlands

Wei-Ya Lin - University of Music and Performing Arts, Vienna, Austria

Anna Maria Bordin - Conservatorio Statale di Musica "Giuseppe Verdi" di Torino, Italy (until April 2025)

Sean Ferguson - Schulich School of Music of McGill University, Montreal, Canada (until April 2025)

Matthias Hermann - Hochschule für Musik und Darstellende Kunst, Stuttgart, Germany (until April 2025)

Lina Navickaitė-Martinelli - Lithuanian Academy of Music and Theatre, Vilnius, Lithuania (until April 2025)

Anne Gry Haugland - The Royal Danish Academy of Music, Copenhagen, Denmark (from September 2025)

Theodore Lee Parker - Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre, Tallinn, Estonia (from September 2025)

Daniela Machione - Conservatorio di Musica "Alfredo Casella", L'Aquila, Italy (from September 2025)

Beatriz Laborda - AEC Office (WG Coordinator)

Pop and Jazz Platform (PJP) Working Group

The PJP preparatory WG is in charge of the organisation of the AEC Annual PJP meeting. It aims to promote and support higher education in popular music and jazz in the widest definition of those terms.

Jere Laukkanen – Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, Helsinki, Finland (WG Chair)

Marta Raviglia – Conservatorio di Musica Girolamo Frescobaldi, Ferrara, Italy

Mario Carrillo – Centro Superior Música Creativa, Madrid, Spain

Michael Kahr – University for Jazz and Popular Music, Vienna, Austria

Sopio Murusidze – V. Saradjishvili Tbilisi State Conservatoire, Georgia

Johannes Pries, Popakademie Baden-Württemberg, Mannheim, Germany
- student representative (until February 2025)

Marloes De Nul - Conservatorium Maastricht, The Netherlands – student representative (from September 2025)

Beatriz Laborda – AEC Office (WG Coordinator)

Tradition, Folk and Global Working Group

In recent years, interest in traditional, folk and global music has grown significantly, both in the music industry, among audiences and in higher music education. In accordance with the wishes of many members, the AEC wants to increase its strategic focus on this part of music life.

Joshua Dickson – Royal Conservatory of Scotland, Glasgow, Scotland, UK (WG Chair)

Althea SullyCole – McGill University - Schulich School of Music, Montreal, Canada

Atlas Ahmadyian – Conservatorio di Musica “Giuseppe Verdi”, Milan, Italy

Anothai Nitibhon – Princess Galyani Vadhana Institute of Music, Bangkok, Thailand

Kelly Veinberg – University of Tartu Viljandi Culture Academy, Viljandi, Estonia

Laura Poggio – Música Creativa, Madrid, Spain

Mátyás Bolya – Franz Liszt Academy of Music, Budapest, Hungary

Unni Løvlid – Norwegian Academy of Music, Oslo, Norway

Beatriz Laborda – AEC Office (WG Coordinator)



Digitisation Working Group

Objectives: The Digitisation WG supports the AEC in helping HMEIs navigate the digital shift, with the aim of guiding the sector through the challenges of digitalisation processes and the transformations driven by disruptive technologies

Thom Gilbert – Royal College of Music, London, UK (WG Chair)

Yaşam Hancilar – Codarts Rotterdam, The Netherlands

Daniela Peclová – Janáček Academy of Performing Arts, Brno, Czech Republic

Matti Ruippo – Tampere University of Applied Sciences, Finland

Anna Habruk – Conservatorio di Musica “Nino Rota”, Monopoli, Italy

Pau Vallès – Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya, Barcelona, Spain

Finn Schumacker – AEC Office (WG Coordinator)

EPASA – European Performing Arts Students’ Association

Monica Vejgaard – Syddansk Musikkonservatorium, Odense, Denmark (President)

Miranda Harmer – Leeds Conservatoire, United Kingdom, (Vice-President)

Iveri Kekenadze Gustafsson – Malmö Academy of Music, Sweden (Board member)

Natalie Roe – Royal Welsh College of Music & Drama, Cardiff, UK (Board member)

Marloes de Nul – Conservatorium Maastricht, The Netherlands (Board member)

Carlo Mazzini – Conservatorio di Musica "Giuseppe Verdi" di Milano, Italy (Board member)

Ashkhen Fixova – AEC Office (Coordinator)



EASY (European Online Application System for Mobility) Task Force

EASY is the most important online tool for student mobility in HME. Through EASY, students can send mobility applications and IRCs can manage incoming and outgoing Erasmus, Nordplus and other types of student mobilities.

Ly Tran – Hochschule für Musik, Weimar, Germany

Noemi Eden – Anton Bruckner Privatuniversität, Linz, Austria

Ruth Graf-Fleet – Conservatorium van Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Lucia di Cecca – Conservatorio di Musica Santa Cecilia, Rome, Italy

José Luis Fernández – Conservatorio Superior de Música, Vigo, Spain

Sara Primiterra – AEC Office (TF Coordinator)

Early Music Task Force

The Early Music Task force has been put together to coordinate the collaboration with the Early Music. Network REMA for the Early Music Summit and follow up the activities of the AEC in the field of early music in the upcoming years.

Isaac Alonso de Molina – Royal Conservatoire The Hague, The Netherlands, (TF Chair)

Claire Michon – Pôle Aliénor, Poitiers, France

Kelly Landerkin – Hochschule für Musik, Basel, Switzerland




Anton Steck – Staatliche Hochschule für Musik, Trossingen, Germany

Sara Primiterra – AEC Office (TF Coordinator)





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