

Festivals and environmental sustainability: cross-cultural cooperation in a green, sustainable and social context

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On behalf of PEARLE

EFA Arts Summit

Together with Tamar Brüggemann and Peter Florence (Festivals Forest) and
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Pearle* Live Performance Europe

Pearle*-Live Performance Europe is the European federation representing through its members and associations some 10 000 theatres, theatre production companies, orchestras and music ensembles, opera houses, ballet and dance companies, festivals, concert halls, venues and other organisations within the performing arts and music sector across Europe.

Pearle*-Live Performance Europe acts as a forum for exchanging information of relevance to members, for sharing experiences in cultural management and technical skills, for supporting and assisting the formation of employers' associations, in addition to serving as the body to make representations to the European Commission and any other authorities whose deliberations may affect the work of the Performing Arts in Europe.

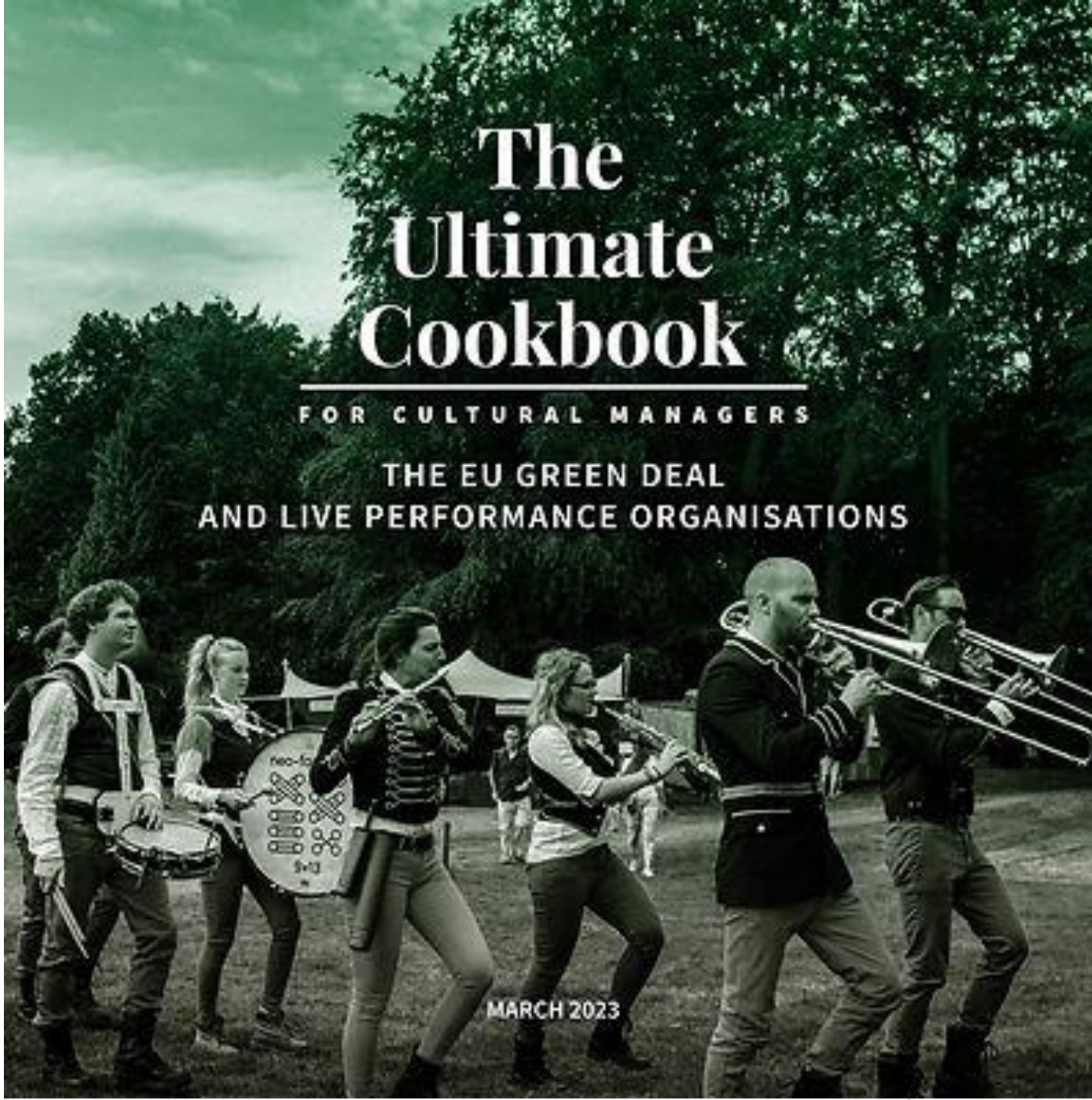


The Ultimate Cookbook

FOR CULTURAL MANAGERS

THE EU GREEN DEAL
AND LIVE PERFORMANCE ORGANISATIONS

MARCH 2023





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the European Union



Alliance for a Net Positive Performing Arts Sector

**Alliance for a Net Positive
Performing Arts Sector Evaluation**

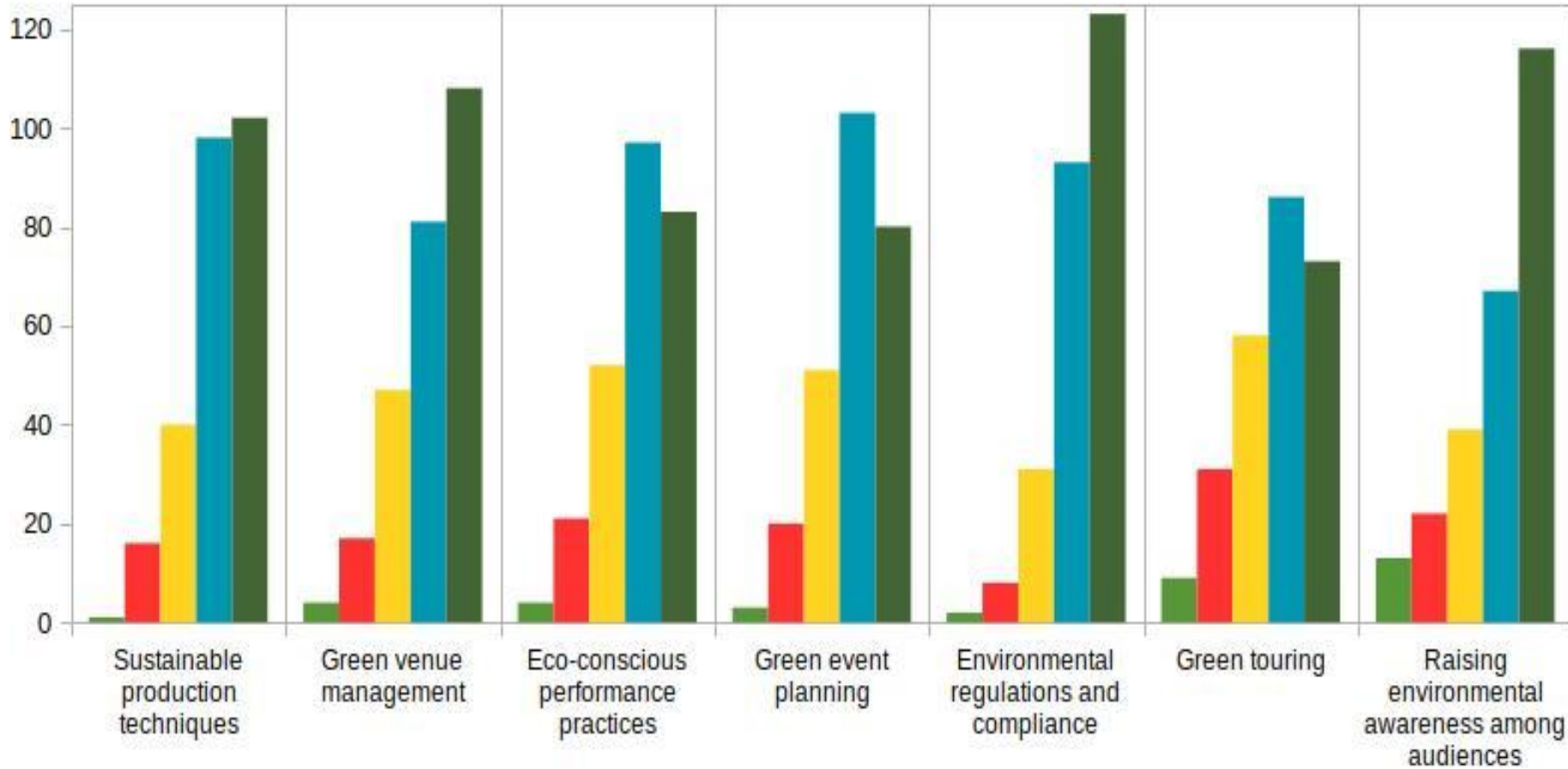
Labour Market Needs Analysis Report

Pearle* – Live Performance Europe

<https://inspire-performing-arts.eu/>

2.1 How important do you consider the following green skills and competences for professionals in the performing arts industry?

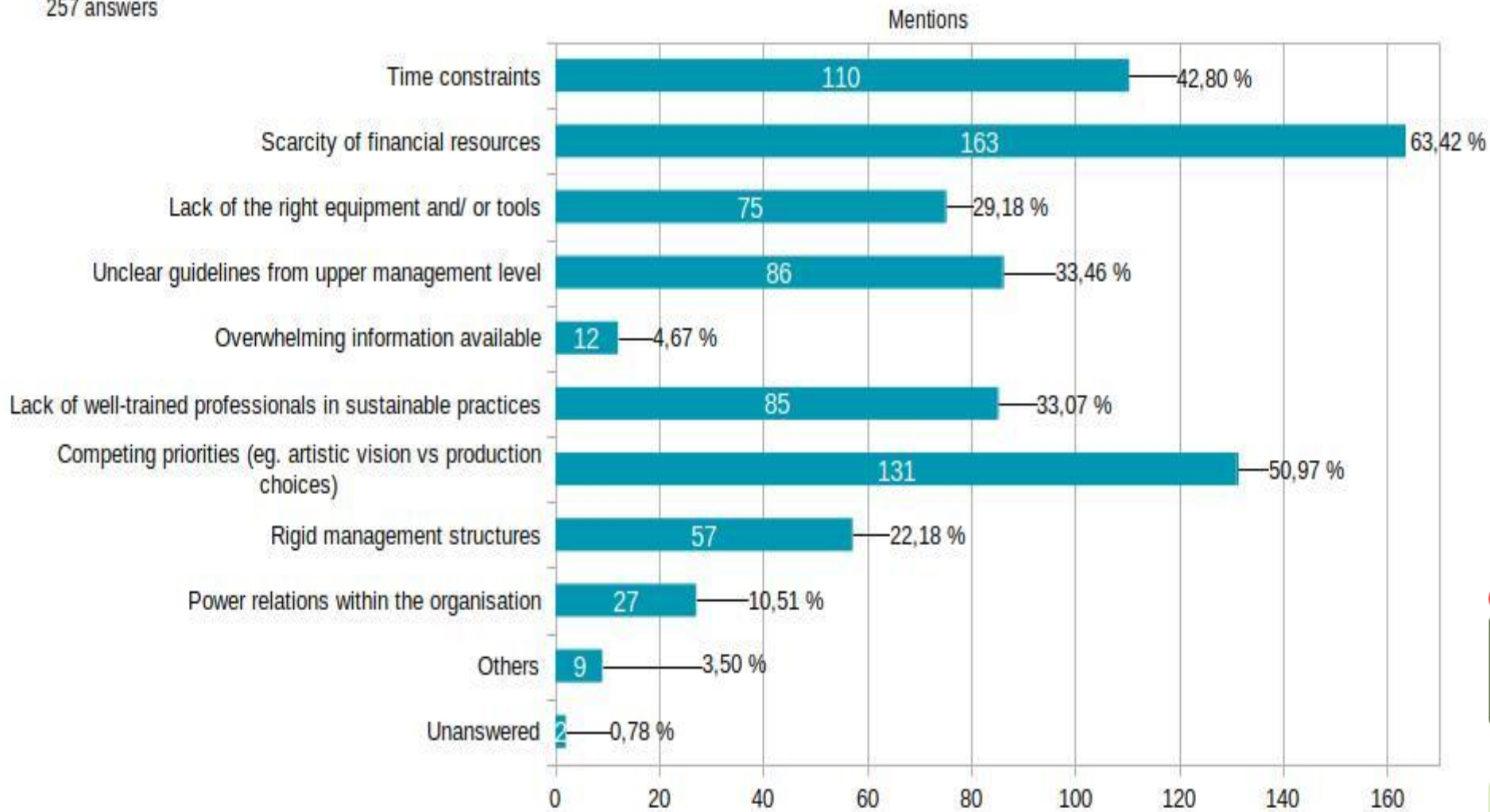
■ Not Important ■ Slightly Important ■ Moderately Important ■ Important ■ Very Important



INSPIRE

2.5 Which are in your opinion the main reasons for the difficulties in adopting sustainability practices in performing arts professions in your country?

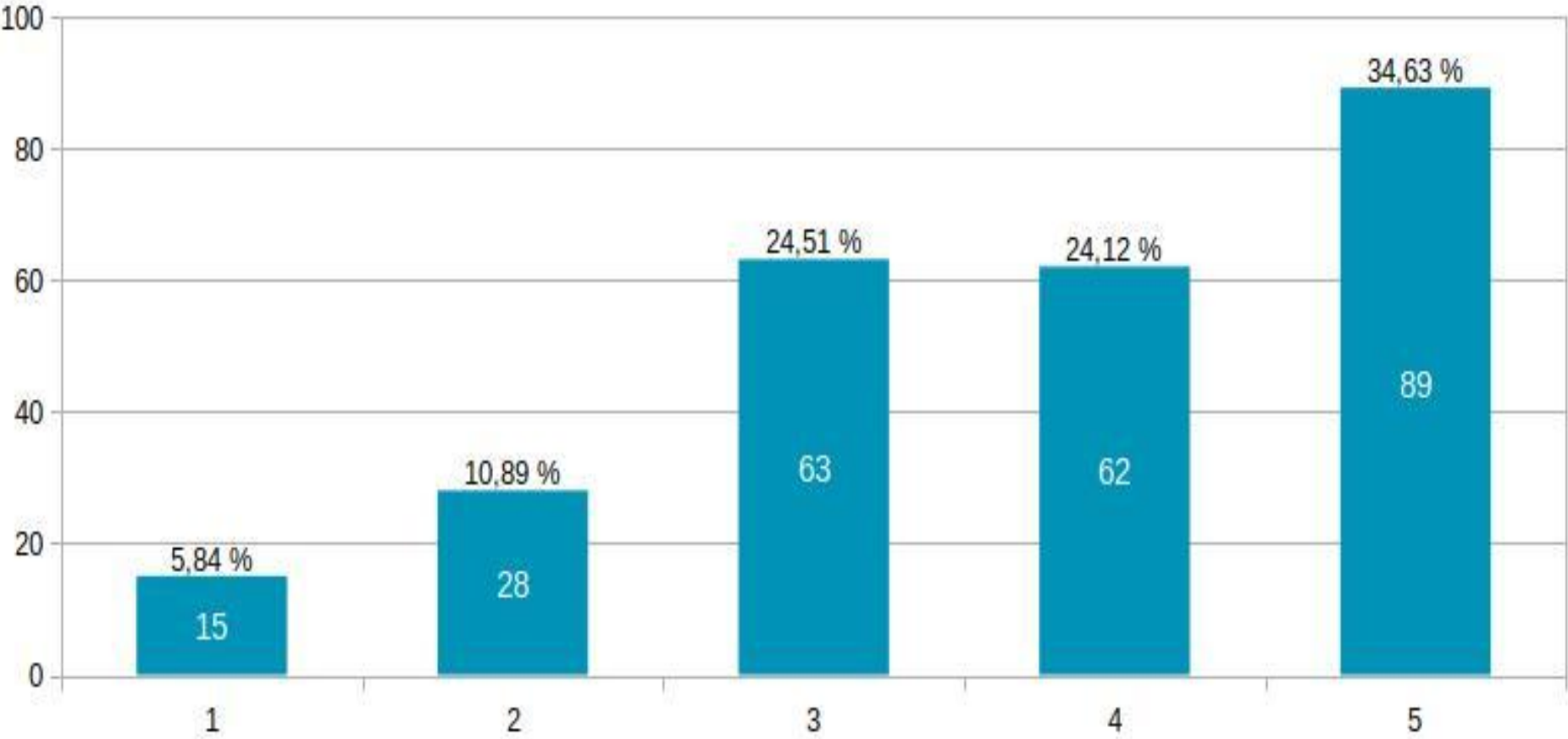
257 answers



INSPIRE

2.9 From your perspective, how significant do you consider the establishment of a new job position within your organisation or the organisations you are associated with, specifically for a sustainability manager?

257 answers



Cultural intermediaries of the green transition? European cultural networks and the balancing act of an emerging social role

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Abstract

This article examines the role of European cultural networks as cultural intermediaries in the green transition within European Union context, where climate action is being mainstreamed in all policy fields, including culture. It contributes to discussions on environmental sustainability in the cultural and creative sectors, the contemporary cultural politics of the environment and the expanded social and political roles of cultural intermediaries. Methodologically, the study combines a review of materials produced by the networks with interviews with 16 network representatives. The article expands the concept of cultural intermediation by identifying three modalities in relation to the green transition – proactive, reactive and passive – and the parameters that shape them. It shows that these modalities should not be understood merely as varying degrees of enthusiasm in relaying policy priorities but also as political stances towards a highly contested agenda and the evolving social roles expected of cultural intermediaries. The analysis argues that intermediation is fundamentally a balancing act – between policy imperatives, funding dependencies, constrained resources and expertise, competitive peer dynamics and individual agency – and provides insights into the negotiated social roles of cultural intermediaries.

Keywords

Cultural intermediaries, cultural policy, European commission, European cultural networks, European Green Deal, green transition

The Ultimate Cookbook

FOR CULTURAL MANAGERS

INFOGRAPHIC
VERSION

THE EU GREEN DEAL AND LIVE PERFORMANCE ORGANISATIONS

How to best apply the Green Deal and integrate environmental sustainability in day-to-day activities of live performance organisations



THE EU'S ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE IN A NUTSHELL...

As a first continent in the world, the European Commission wants Europe to become a net-zero emitter of greenhouse gases by 2050. The objective of climate neutrality is set out in the EU Climate Law.

The way to go there...

EUROPEAN Green Deal

- Policy proposals to help reduce net greenhouse gases
- Review of existing sector policies to match the increased climate policy ambition
- New financial instruments for citizens and SMEs

Funding available for the ecological transition through the Green Deal

Investment Plan:
€ 1 trillion until 2030.

- 2030** Aim: Reduction of EU emissions by at least 55%, compared to 1990 levels.
- 2040** Goals still to be defined in the years to come.
- 2050** The EU to become the first climate-neutral economy and society, reducing net GHG emissions to zero. The emissions that won't be mitigated would be extracted, i.e. via forest and carbon capture and storage technologies.

What is sustainability?

Sustainability refers to a balance between the environment, social equity and the economy. It recognises the need to wisely use our natural and finite resources on Earth. In the cultural sector, sustainability in the broad sense includes durable action on artistic, human, social, economic and environmental aspects.

1 Thinking circular when producing a performance

PRODUCTION OF PERFORMANCES

Principles
applied to...



- ✓ Re-use
- ✓ Reduce
- ✓ Re-cycle
- ✓ Re-manufacture

- ✓ Stage lights
- ✓ Stage design
- ✓ Textiles/fabrics
- ✓ Techn. equipment
- ✓ Sets
- ✓ Costumes
- ✓ Packaging
- ✓ Food
- ✓ Drinks
- ✓ Waste

Have you thought about...

- What do I know about the sustainable standards of products and the value chain of the product?
- Can I find sustainable alternatives when purchasing products, food etc.?
- Which materials do I choose in the first place for a performance?
- Can I check on suppliers on the durable quality of their products and materials?
- Is there a way to re-use fabrics for costumes?
- Can I recycle material and products in an appropriate way?
- Can I find a different way of working artistically to reduce waste and produce more sustainably?

2

Saving energy buildings and stages

Keep in mind

- ✓ Construction/renovation to meet energy performance standards
- ✓ Heating costs and related future taxes
- ✓ Stage lighting and appropriate replacing of light networks
- ✓ Energy performance certificates
- ✓ Infrastructure of sustainable mobility
- ✓ Infrastructure of solar energy

WHEN BUILDING
OR RENOVATING
A LIVE PERFORMANCE VENUE...

Advise

Tips for getting support when renovating or building a venue

- Social Climate Fund for SMEs
- National recovery plans
- National renovations plans (mandatory under EU law)

In EU legislation on the Energy Performance of Buildings, there are special rules for historic theatres and other protected buildings – they can be exempt from energy performance requirements. Get in touch with your authorities about this topic.

3

Sustainable mobility touring and audience travels



- > Touring travelling of groups, organisations and artists
- > Audience travel to see a show or event

By 2050...

the EU wants to cut transport related greenhouse gas emissions by 90%, compared to 1990 levels

How can we contribute?
CHANGING MOBILITY PATTERNS? GOING DIGITAL?

Have you thought about...

- Slow mobility patterns
- Cooperations with other live performance organisations
- Changing transport means
- Cooperation with transport operators for audience travel
- The scope of your audiences

4

Securing funding finding your green strategy



WHEN YOU APPLY FOR OVERALL FUNDING

Green loans and the EU Taxonomy

- ✓ Think about: which activities of your organisation could contribute to climate literacy and awareness of audiences?
- ✓ Ask your bank to label a loan or a credit for your live performance organisation as a 'green' investment

Funding through national schemes

- Ask your government to receive funding i.e. under the recovery and resilience plan, i.e. in the following fields:
- ✓ Audience development
- ✓ Digitisation of your business
- ✓ Internationalisation of your activities
- ✓ Developing creative, technical and management skills



WHEN YOU APPLY FOR PROJECTS

Creative Europe funding programme

- ✓ Gain extra points for your application by including environment-friendly action

New European Bauhaus initiative

- ✓ Become a partner in a NEB project
- ✓ Develop alternative dissemination channels through the project
- ✓ Connect to local and urban communities in the frame of their urban strategies

More information about EU funding schemes and funding opportunities under national recovery and resilience plans can be found in the **CulturEU Funding Guide of the European Commission**.



For further information read

The Ultimate Cookbook for Cultural Managers:

The EU Green Deal and Live Performance Organisations

(March 2023)

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2023



Tumastaðir - Tom's Place

The European Festivals Forest

2023-2053

WHO

Arts Festivals across Europe are coming together to plant a forest in Iceland to offset their carbon emissions. The project is run by The European Festivals Forest Foundation, a not-for-profit registered in the Netherlands. Our key partner is Skógræktin - the Icelandic Forest Service.

WHY

Festivals are gatherers of progressive early adopters, free- and forward-thinkers, and are incubators of both societal positivity and behavioural change. 75% of all festivals' carbon footprint is audience and artists' travel. The European Festivals Forest is a simple way for the festival industry to lead a progressive call to climate action together.

From Myrkvidr and Silvanus to Gretel and the Gruffalo, the forest is central in European mythology.

WHAT

We are working with Skógræktin to plant 2,500 trees per hectare with locally incubated seedlings of Lodgepole pine, Sitka spruce, black cottonwood and downy birch in a mosaic landscape – a bio-diverse forest, with open glades, wetlands, streams and ponds.

In our sector's drive to Net Zero by 2030 this afforestation project is the carbon sequestration plan that complements best practice in reduction, repurpose and recycling sustainability policy in the events industry.

The Festival Forest

Join Arts Festivals Across Europe



WHERE

Tumastaðir (Tom's Place) was originally a plantation owned by the Norwegian Forest Service. At the time, the land was completely forestless. In 1944, a grove of Sitka spruce was planted on the slope; the first in Iceland with more than a few trees. Tumastaðir is now a diverse forest - including ash, oak, martåll - with open areas and good access to roads and trails. The Sitka spruce seed garden is located in Tumastaðir with selected trees that will produce seeds in the coming years. Also produced there are seeds of the so-called 'Emblu', a mixture with Icelandic birch, which is bushy and fast-growing.



Where do you
stand today?

- ▶ How many of
you have a
sustainability
policy?

Where do you
stand today?

► How many
measure
environmental
impact?

Where do you
stand today?

- ▶ How many have
(sustainable)
mobility
guidelines for
artists?

Where do you
stand today?

- ▶ How many have
(sustainable)
mobility
guidelines for
audiences ?

Where do you
stand today?

► How many have
a sustainability
manager ?

Environmental sustainability often means navigating tensions:

- ▶ long-term responsibility versus short-term survival
- ▶ environmental goals versus accessibility
- ▶ global mobility versus territorial fairness
- ▶ transformation versus feasibility

Today we will navigate dilemmas

► Today there are no correct answers!

What you should discuss in your group:

- What would you do?
- Who benefits?
- Who loses?
- Is there an alternative?

Dilemma 1/ Funding requirements

You are applying for European funding together with other partners. Sustainability criteria are increasingly important. To comply seriously, you need to:

- ▶ switch to greener suppliers
- ▶ invest in carbon tracking tools
- ▶ redesign production processes

But your festival already operates with a fragile budget.

Do you:

- ▶ A: Invest in sustainability upgrades and risk financial stability ?

OR

- ▶ B: Maintain your current model and transition more slowly but lose the opportunity to apply for EU funding ?

Reflection questions

- ▶ Should sustainability become mandatory for funding?
- ▶ Can all festivals realistically comply equally?

Dilemma 2/ Funding requirements

Your CEO/ Festival Director strongly supports sustainability and asks all departments to adapt. You are part of the programming team and for you this means:

- ▶ reducing international programming
- ▶ limiting air travel

Do you:

- ▶ A: Commit to radical transformation ?

OR

- ▶ B: Adopt gradual changes ?

Reflection questions

- ▶ Can we compromise “international artistic excellence” for the environment?

Dilmenna 3/ Offsetting

Your festival decided to contribute €4. 000 annually to the Festival Forest initiative.

You are in the production team. Do you:

► A. Maintain offsetting as a key pillar of your sustainability strategy?

OR

► B. Shift focus toward reducing emissions directly within your festival?

Reflection questions

- ▶ Do such contributions meaningfully compensate for limited changes in operational practices?

Dilemma 4/ Infrastructure inequalities

- ▶ You invite an artist from a neighboring country to participate in your festival.

However, sustainable transport options are limited:

- Train: 30 hours, multiple connections, medium cost
- Bus: 20 hours, long and tiring journey
- Plane: 2 hours, inexpensive and reliable

Do you:

- ▶ A. Insist on low-carbon travel, even if it means long, exhausting, and potentially exclusionary journeys for the artist

OR

- ▶ B. Accept air travel as the most feasible option in this context, despite its environmental impact

Reflection questions

- ▶ Who is actually responsible for the carbon impact in this situation: the festival, the artist, or the transport infrastructure?
- ▶ Does insisting on low-carbon travel risk excluding certain artists or regions from cultural exchange?
- ▶ How do transport infrastructures reproduce inequalities between countries and regions in Europe?

Dilemma 5/ Audiences

- ▶ Your festival is experiencing growing international visibility, and around 30% of your audience now comes from abroad, resulting in more carbon emissions.

This raises questions about how you define your public and your priorities.

Do you:

- ▶ A. Continue to prioritise international reach and visibility ?

OR

- ▶ B. Refocus on strengthening local and regional audiences as the most feasible option in this context?

Reflection question

- ▶ What does “audience” mean in your festival: a local community, an international network, or both—and how does this definition shape your sustainability choices?

Dilemma 6/ Touring

Your festival is an important festival in Budva and is now considering an international touring project and must define its route.

Do you:

- ▶ A. Tour major European cities, with better transport connections and higher visibility ?

OR

- ▶ B. Tour smaller cities in Southeast Europe, with less efficient transport routes but less carbon emissions and broader territorial inclusion ?

Reflection question

- ▶ Can environmentally sustainable touring also be territorially inclusive, or do these objectives sometimes pull in different directions?

Dilemma 6/ Audience resistance

Your festival introduces a no-meat policy as part of its environmental strategy. Audience reactions are mixed and some people even publicly complain that “You cannot decide for me”.

Do you:

- ▶ A. Maintain the policy as a clear environmental commitment, even if it creates resistance?

OR

- ▶ B. Withdraw the policy to preserve audience satisfaction and acceptance ?

Reflection question

- ▶ Where should festivals position themselves between guiding environmental change and responding to audience expectations?

Your own dilemmas

- ▶ What sustainability dilemma are you currently facing in your own festival?

Closing

- ▶ What is one change your organization could realistically start tomorrow?