



## Petitions Committee

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA

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Rt Hon Oliver Dowden CBE MP  
Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport  
Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport  
100 Parliament Street  
London  
SW1A 2BQ

20 January 2021

Dear Secretary of State,

I am writing regarding e-petition 563294, which calls for the Government to seek a Europe-wide Visa-free work permit for Touring professionals and Artists.

Given the significant public interest in this issue, the Petitions Committee has agreed to hold an e-petition session on this subject on Monday 8 February. We are holding this session in lieu of a Westminster Hall debate, because sittings in Westminster Hall have been suspended. The session will broadly follow the format of a Westminster Hall debate, with contributions from Members across the House. I would be grateful if you could confirm that a Minister from the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport will attend virtually and provide a respond at the conclusion of this session.

Ahead of our session, I wanted to ask you to clarify the Government's response to this petition, in light of recent press reports.

The Government's response states that during negotiations the UK proposed measures to allow creative professionals to travel and perform in both the UK and EU, without needing work-permits, but states that the EU rejected these proposals, on the basis that musicians were providing a service which they viewed as necessitating a work permit and/or visa.

However, since the Government responded to this petition it has been reported that EU sources have said it was the UK Government's choice to end visa-free touring for musicians, and that No 10 sources had also said that an EU proposal to allow visa-free tours by musicians was rejected

I am therefore asking you to clarify what arrangements the UK sought during negotiations, and what arrangements were offered by the EU and why these were rejected.

I'd be grateful if you could reply by Thursday 4 February, so that we are able to publish your response ahead of our session.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Catherine". The script is cursive and fluid, with a large initial 'C'.

Catherine McKinnell MP  
Chair of the Petitions Committee