

UK Musicians Performing Overseas

Westminster Hall Debate, 25 November 2015 at 1430hrs

A Westminster Hall Debate on the motion, 'this House has considered UK musicians performing overseas' has been scheduled for Wednesday 25 November.

The member in charge of the debate is Nigel Adams MP, who is also the chair of the APPG on music.

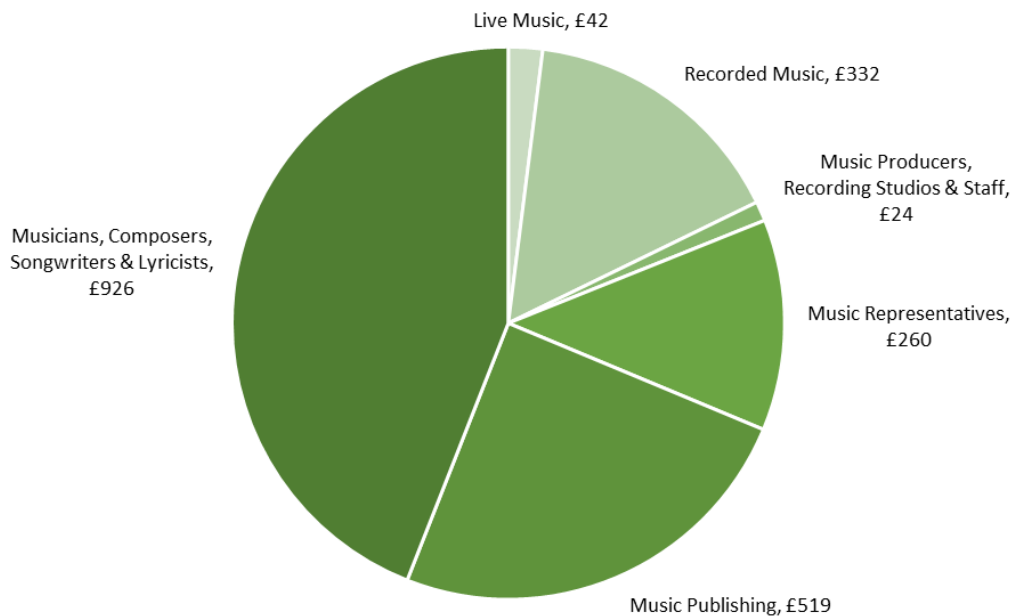
The proceedings of the debate may be watched on parliamentlive.tv

1.1 The value of UK music

The UK is one of only three countries in the world which is a net exporter of music.¹ According to [UK Music](#), in 2014 the music industry contributed £4.1 billion to the UK economy.

The Total Export Revenue in 2014 from UK music was £2.1 billion. Of this £42 million came from Live Music performances, and £926m from the work of musicians, composers, songwriters and lyricists.²

Total Export Revenue of UK Music in 2014, £ million



Source: UK Music, *Measuring Music 2015*

¹ EDM 60 [session 2012-13], [Music Royalties from Abroad](#), 20 signatures.

² UK Music, *Measuring Music 2015*.

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The change from 2013 in relation to UK music exports was as follows:

- +14% live music
- +17% recorded music
- +3% musicians, composers, songwriters and lyricists
- +4% music producers, recording studios and staff
- No change music publishing
- -4% music representatives

1.2 Support for UK musicians overseas

There is a variety of support for members of the UK music industry in overseas work. Much of the support is financial with a variety of funds provided by government through regional arts councils and specialist schemes.

British Phonographic Industry

The [British Phonographic Industry](#) (BPI) is a trade body representing the UK's recorded music industry. Part of their role includes promoting British music abroad and they provide support to members in developing their business and revenues from internationally.

British Council

The [British Council](#) have specialist music advisors who identify projects and support performers as part of the Council's mission to create trust and understanding between the UK and the rest of the world. As well as general support, the British Council jointly fund the [Artists' International Development Fund](#) with the Arts Council England.

Music Export Growth Scheme

The [Music Export Growth Scheme](#) (MEGS) began under the Coalition Government, and is designed to make grants of between £5,000 - £50,000 to support UK musicians in projects overseas.

The funding for MEGS comes from [UK Trade & Investment](#), and the scheme is administered by the BPI.

Arts Councils

The regional arts councils – [Arts Council England](#), [Creative Scotland](#), [Arts Council of Wales](#) and the [Arts Council of Northern Ireland](#) – all can provide advice to musicians looking to promote their music overseas and assist in finding funding.

In 2010, the Arts Council England produced a joint report with the British Council [*Supporting UK Musicians Abroad*](#).

1.3 Issues faced by musicians overseas

The problems faced by performers from the UK in exporting their work overseas has been brought to the attention of Parliament through three Early Day Motions in recent years.

The most recent, [US Visas for Performing Musicians](#), called the House to, “recognise the difficulties for UK musicians obtaining work visas to enter the US to perform”. Specifically it noted that it is difficult for musicians who earn salaries of under £20,000 per year to meet visa requirements to perform in the USA; especially the requirement that they attend in person the embassies in Belfast or London. This, notes the EDM, causes delays which leads to shows and sometimes full tours being cancelled. The EDM called for the US and the UK to devise a more workable system for UK musicians to perform in the US. This EDM received 38 signatures from Members of Parliament.

A previous EDM, [Musicians and Airlines](#), recognised that some musicians were being penalised by airlines who were charging excessive fees to take musical instruments on planes, sometimes being required to pay for extra seats.

The EDM, [Music Royalties from Abroad](#), noted the creative endeavours of UK performers overseas and the value to the UK economy of the revenue obtained through British music abroad. It called on the UK Government to ensure that there were “robust copyright and fiscal policies, both domestically and internationally, to ensure that the UK maintains its music export competitive advantage”.

1.4 Further Information

The following resources may be of interest in relation to this debate:

Parliamentary Business

Early Day Motion 609 of session 2015-16, [US Visas for Performing Musicians](#)

Early Day Motion 60 of session 2012-13, [Music Royalties from Abroad](#)

Early Day Motion 741 of session 2010-12, [Musicians and Airlines](#)

The All Party Parliamentary Group on Music: <http://www.allpartymusicgroup.org.uk/>

Funding and Support for UK Musicians

Arts Council England: www.artscouncil.org.uk

Arts Council of Northern Ireland: www.artscouncil-ni.org

Arts Council of Wales: www.artswales.org.uk

The British Council, [UK Music Funding and Support](#) [website]

British Phonographic Industry: www.bpi.co.uk

BPI, [Music Export Growth Scheme](#) [website]

Creative Scotland: www.creativescotland.com

Reports

Arts Council England, [Supporting UK Musicians Abroad](#), (2010)

UK Music, [Measuring Music 2015](#), (2015)

UK Music, [Music Tourism: Wish You Were Here 2015](#), (2015)

GOV.UK – UK T&I, [Thirteen more acts set to promote UK music abroad](#)