

Fair Pay Recommendations for international events (January 2024)

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Introduction:

Why do we need recommendations on fair pay / fair remuneration?

The European Choral Association is a member of the European and International Music Council (IMC) and subscribes to the Five Music Rights developed by them. The 5th right is **the right for all musical artists “to obtain just recognition and fair remuneration for their work”**.

This right has often not fully been respected in the choral sector in the past.

The European Choral Association therefore decided to research what could be “fair pay” for choral conductors and vocal leaders working at international events, as conductors of auditioned international ensembles, as workshop leaders, masterclass leaders or lecturers, as well as for composers who are commissioned a choral work.

These recommendations are the result of this work and were partly applied for the first time at the event “Leading Voices” in Utrecht, The Netherlands.

The aim of the document is:

- **to help organisers of cooperation events of the European Choral Association** (Europa Cantat Festival, Leading Voices, Europa Cantat junior, World Youth Choir, European Youth Choir (fka EuroChoir) and conferences / workshops organised directly by the European Choral Association) **include fair pay in the budgets for their events from the very beginning** and try to stick to these fees as much as possible
- **to give organisers of European/international events under the label of the European Choral Association an idea of fair pay principles** and encourage them to apply those principles for their event and where possible also apply the fair pay fees in as far as their circumstances allow it (some adjustments may be necessary depending on the location of the event) .
- **to promote the principle of fair pay to the member organisations of the European Choral Association as principal, to be adapted** to the financial situation in the corresponding country, and offering training on the idea of fair pay
- **to promote the principle of fair pay in the sector, beyond the membership**

Attempt of a definition of “fair pay” or “fair remuneration”

The board of the European Choral Association decided to work on these recommendations and started with the attempt to define what is meant by fair pay or fair remuneration in the context of international events and activities. The reason was that international activities can never compete with activities on a local level as they work with people from different countries that have a different standard of living. In this context the board of the European Choral Association suggests that fair pay should be based on the following basic principles which were defined in relation to international cooperation events of the European Choral Association. (These principles) only cover international events where professionals from abroad are being hired. For events which are purely national, the national or local regulations can and should be followed concerning fees, travel, meals, stay, etc.)

1. The core principle of fair pay is **equal payment**:
 - for equal kind of work (when hiring a conductor for a conducting course, the fee can differ from hiring the same person for other work such as performing as soloist or giving a short lecture).
 - regardless of gender, age, country of residency / origin and of where an event takes place
 - regardless of the level of education / professional training as people are hired for their knowledge, experience and quality, so education is not a measurement
2. Payment should be **based on the costs incurred and impact on the work life** of the artists:
 - Payment per day or half day or per a number of successive days or per project
 - As events of the European Choral Association are international and therefore require travel in most cases, also travel days count as work and should be paid according to a specific rule.
 - When travel is not needed because of hybrid or online events, this rule does not apply
 - Since working at an international event means that you need to travel, sometimes pay a visa or get a vaccine, to stay somewhere and to eat, fair pay also means that these costs should usually be covered. Each organisation must define how to deal with this in terms and conditions (such as class of travel, means of transportation, who will book tickets and if travel expenses can only be covered for trips from the place of residence to the event and back or people can also travel to / from other places, if meals are paid or refunded or if a flat rate is paid, and how the accommodation is organised). These terms and conditions should be fixed in the contract / agreement.
3. **Possible additional costs:** In addition organisers should take into consideration:
 - Additional preparatory activities such as preparing material, files, an open singing booklet (preparations for regular work are included in the fee)
 - If new (technical) skills are required for a job, this can influence the fee.
 - If technical equipment (like an instrument) or technical solutions (like making a video) are required for the work, this should be paid by the organisers of the event
4. **Fees offered / negotiated (where possible) should ideally be net**, meaning that you indicate the amount the person will actually receive, after the reduction of tax, social security or any other legal obligation. However, national or regional regulations concerning social security and taxes differ a lot from country to country and must be taken into account when setting up contracts. In any case it should be made clear in the contract or invoices whether taxes have to be paid in addition at home or in the country where the event is taking place. (National or regional standards for paying fees may have to be taken into account when defining a final fee - even when these standard are not clearly written down or made official).
5. If at an international event, **a group of musicians is contracted from the country where the event takes place**, national regulations or habits concerning payment are preferred and can be accepted (e.g. if a German national orchestra is contracted for an event happening in Germany, German rules would most probably apply for the payment).
6. Contracts should include a **cancellation policy** clarifying when in the timeline leaving up to the event the job can still be cancelled under which conditions, and from when a cancellation fee will be paid. Since the Covid-19 pandemic it has also become fair practice in many countries to pay a partial fee even if the reasons for short-term cancellation are unforeseen circumstances for which the organisers are not responsible. Each organisation can and should define its own cancellation policy either with a percentage related to the fee or with a minimum amount that is in relation to the time schedule of the event and the amount of work required for preparation up to a certain point in time. Contracts should be written in a common language that both the organiser and the artist or lecturer both speak or agree on, for international events ideally in English at least for the foreign artists.

Proposal of concrete fees for partnership events of the European Choral Association

On the basis of the definition of fair pay / fair remuneration as described above, and looking at the typical tasks for which artists are usually paid at cooperation events of the European Choral Association, the following “fair pay” scheme was developed and approved by the board of the European Choral Association in 2024. The European Choral Association will attempt to make sure that these fees are paid, as much as possible at cooperation events of the association and will refer to these recommendations in the cooperation agreements for these events.

Proposal of fair pay fees for atelier conductors, lecturers, lab and masterclass leaders, leaders of the World Youth Choir and EuroChoir, etc.		
Suggested by the European Choral Association	One half day*	150€ to 180€
	Travel (up to 2 travel days)	equal to one half day work
	preparation (depending on the type of work)	Will differ according to the type of work, must be added if preparation work is intensive (e.g. for Open Singing booklet)
	taxes (and sometimes social security)	Must be covered if applicable
	Travel costs	Must be covered if people travel (including visa costs)
	Stay	Must be covered if people do not live locally, or a flatrate paid out
	Meals	Should be covered, also for local people when they cannot eat at home, or a flatrate paid out
* No difference between lecture, workshop or exact number of hours		

Proposal of fair pay for composers for commissioned works		
Suggested by the European Choral Association	Fee for a cappella compositions	<u>Additional fee per minute</u>
	Starting fee	€ 250,00
	1-2 voices (children's choirs)	€ 100-120
	3-4 voices	€ 150-200
	Over 4 voices	€ 250-300
	If you add instruments / orchestra there must be a higher fee	

Some examples (using the lower end of the ranges indicated above)

- An atelier conductor invited for an event with 6 days of morning rehearsals (6 half days) and 2 days of travel and using the lower part of the range indicated above, would receive 1.050 €
- Somebody invited only for a lecture / a discovery atelier (1 half day) would receive 300 €.
- Somebody conducting an auditioned choir alone, with rehearsals in the mornings and afternoons for a total duration of 14 days including concert tour (28 half days) would receive 4350 €.
- A composer commissioned a 5-minute work for 4-part choir would receive 1.000 €

Suggestions for other events under the label of the European Choral Association and international events organised by members of the European Choral Association

While the European Choral Association can and will attempt to make sure that the fair pay fees suggested above will be paid as much as possible at cooperation events of the European Choral Association in future, it can of course not impose to other events under the label of the European Choral Association, or other international events organised by members of the European Choral Association, to apply the same fees.

However, the European Choral Association would like to recommend to its members and to all partners, organisers of international events, under the label of the European Choral Association or others, to raise awareness for fair pay principles as described in the definition of fair pay above, and to apply them as much as possible when employing professionals for their events.

Ideally, also the fair pay fees should be applied, in as far as the circumstances of the events allows this. However, the board of the European Choral Association is fully aware that this may often not be possible, depending on the circumstances in the country where the event is taking place (see introduction above).