

RESOURCES FOR J.M.O. MEMBER CLUBS TRAVELLING TO E.U. COUNTRIES

BACKGROUND

Following the end of the Brexit transition period on 31st January 2021, the UK became a '3rd country' as regards the EU. Previous rules of freedom of movement and the right to work across the EU ended for UK citizens as a result.

This note gathers together some key resources for JMO member clubs to consider prior to travelling into an EU country to perform. Please note, this is limited to the situation of UK citizens, those who are citizens of another non-EU country or of an EU country should take further advice if intending to travel with a JMO member club to perform within the EU.

TRAVEL AND VISAS

UK citizens can travel to the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland & Liechtenstein without the need for a visa, **for tourism purposes**. This is for stays of up to 90 days in any 180 day period (Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus and Romania have a slightly different approach to the 90 day period. This should be checked if travelling to these countries). Please see the attached link for details.

<https://www.gov.uk/visit-eu-switzerland-norway-iceland-liechtenstein>

This also gives information on changes to access to medical care, new requirements for driving in the EU, advice on renewal of passports, what to expect at the border and a number of practical matters. It also covers new rules on animal and plant products, mentioned further below.

The Republic of Ireland and the UK have a separate 'Common Travel Area' agreement dating back to the partition of Ireland which has separate regulations. These mean rights to travel/work are different from the above. Generally UK citizens do not require visas to travel or work in the Republic of Ireland. Link here to information from the Irish Government.:-

https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/government_in_ireland/ireland_and_the_uk/common_travel_area_between_ireland_and_the_uk.html#

WORK PERMITS

As a general right to work within the EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland & Liechtenstein no longer exists for UK citizens, you will need to consider whether your activities come within the definition of 'work' in the country you are travelling to. See link below for further guidance:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-if-you-need-a-visa-or-permit-for-europe>

Each country makes their own rules as to what constitutes 'work' for this purpose and this should be checked carefully depending on what you intend to do when you are there.

'Work' can have a much wider definition than employment. It may include receiving expenses when abroad, having accommodation, travel or subsistence paid for, making street collections or giving demonstrations at an event. These questions are decided by each Country for themselves and there is no common definition within the EU.

Work permits are not the same as Visas.

Do not assume you will be classed as tourists. Check carefully. Details of different EU member's rules are available via this link which includes any additional travel visa requirements:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/travelling-to-the-eu-switzerland-norway-iceland-or-liechtenstein-for-work>

If your activity is classed as work in the country you are planning to visit, this places additional requirements on you. Goods you are carrying with you may need customs duty waivers (ATA Carnets) which must be arranged in advance of travel and are expensive. More information here:-

<https://www.gov.uk/visit-eu-switzerland-norway-iceland-liechtenstein/business-travel-extra-requirements>

<https://www.gov.uk/taking-goods-out-uk-temporarily>

Again UK citizens travelling to the Republic of Ireland are treated differently, see link above.

SHORT TERM TOURING FOR ARTISTS AND PERFORMERS

In August the UK Govt confirmed short term visits to some EU countries for touring artists should not require a work permit.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/visa-free-short-term-touring-allowed-in-19-member-states>

The Musicians Union response to this raises some important questions. Do not assume. Check carefully:-

<https://musiciansunion.org.uk/news/mu-responds-to-government-announcement-on-visa-free-short-term-touring-in-some-member-states>

TRAVELLING WITH FOOD, DRINK, ANIMAL OR PLANT PRODUCTS

UK citizens travelling into EU, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland & Liechtenstein are now heavily restricted as to which of these products they can bring with them across the border.

Meat and Dairy regulations are explained here:

https://ec.europa.eu/food/animals/animalproducts/personal_imports_en

Plant and animal product restrictions are here:-

https://ec.europa.eu/food/plant/plant_health_biosecurity/non_eu_trade_en

These rules are complex and will be enforced at the border. Unless you are sure any such items are allowed and can prove this if necessary to a customs official, do not carry such items with you.

If you know something is prohibited but wish to take it with you, whether visiting as a tourist or on business, additional permits are required. Link below for information:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/export-plants-and-plant-products-from-great-britain-and-northern-ireland>

JMO INSURANCE COVER

Sides leaving the UK are reminded that they MUST log the trip with the JMO prior to the event in order to have the liability cover extended for the trip. There is no cost involved unless your trip is to North America where £100 plus Insurance Premium Tax is charged. If you do not register your trip you will not be covered.

You should also remember to make sure you are also insured for personal liability, kit and instruments and other covers. You can take out a group travel policy or individual travel insurance on an annual basis or just for the trip. Personal Liability and Kit and Instrument cover can also be covered by your household policy. Speak to your normal Insurance provider in respect of such cover.

To log your trip, please send an e-mail to the JMO Insurance Officer at StimpsonM@aol.com. If you have any questions you can ring him on 01923 770425 any afternoon.

PRACTICAL STEPS TO TAKE WHEN PLANNING A TRIP

- Contact the JMO Insurance Officer before travelling, details above.
- Check whether your intended activities may be classed as work in the country you are to visit. Speak to the organisers of events you are attending, they should be able to help if used to non-EU teams attending. Check with the relevant Embassy in the UK for that country if unclear.
- If your team is classed as working, check visa and work permit requirements and obtain these well in advance, you cannot do this at the border. Also consider the equipment (musical instruments etc.) you are taking and whether they need a customs Carnet. Obtain in advance to avoid customs duty being charged at the border.
- Check your team's passport expiry dates, health insurance cover and requirements regarding driving licenses/insurance etc. if relevant
- If any food, plant or animal products are being taken, check whether these are permitted or need additional permits. Avoid taking them if at all possible and purchase at your destination.
- Expect friction at the border and plan for this. Have your documents and answers ready. Border staff at your destination will be used to travellers from 3rd countries and will be alert to all these issues. This will be very different from past travel to the EU

CONCLUSION

This note has multiple links to important sources of information. These sources should be read alongside this note as they contain much more detail than is possible here.

Government advice may also change over time and should be checked at source before planning a trip.

These changes affect all travel, not just Morris, Sword etc. and are subject to ongoing discussions between the UK Government and the EU. Preparation at an early stage when planning a trip is essential to avoid problems at the border and a ruined trip.

These notes are to help members clubs research the issues that may affect their plans. However each member club must take responsibility for dealing with this themselves and the Morris Federation,

Morris Ring and Open Morris cannot accept responsibility for any loss that may occur to member clubs.

These changes are new and will affect many member clubs who have long standing connections within the EU. At the time of writing, little travel has happened under this new regime and the JMO Committee would like to hear from member clubs about their experiences as they plan and undertake trips. Sharing experiences good or bad can help inform others. Please contact me at edworrall@gmail.com with any information from your side's trips that may be of help to others.

Ed Worrall

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Past Squire of the Morris Ring

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