

PROMUSE NEWSLETTER II



CONTINUING EDUCATION IN MUSIC AND PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION OF MUSICIANS

Promuse is a project co-ordinated by the *Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC)*, which aims to strengthen the relationship between higher music education and the professional music world throughout Europe. In order to be able to offer music students and professional musicians better professional opportunities, the areas of professional integration and continuing education are being addressed. The two-year project is supported by the LEONARDO programme of the European Union.

In its first year, the *Promuse* project has been active in establishing an overview of the current state of, and latest developments in, the professional integration of musicians and continuing education in music at a European level. Part of this overview consists of defining needs within these two areas. The two *Promuse* topics have been divided between two working groups, each consisting of at least one representative per partner organisation. The partners in this project are: the AEC, Sibelius Academy Continuing Education Centre - Helsinki, Centre de Ressources Musique et Danse de la Cité de la Musique - Paris, Association of British Orchestras - London, European Music Office - Brussels, Stichting PodiumKunstWerk - The Hague, Koninklijke Nederlandse Toonkunstenaars Vereniging - Amsterdam. For the first time, organisations from different European countries, with different backgrounds and with different remits, have worked together on these issues.

The working groups have each met approximately four times in the first year and have had shared meetings on two occasions. A lot of new information has been gathered through discussions in the working groups, by separate partner institutions, through several questionnaires (to conservatoires, other continuing education providers, former students and orchestras) and through sessions during the AEC conference in November, which were dedicated to *Promuse* topics. The initial results of the questionnaires of both working groups provide us with a fascinating insight into the current state of provision in the two research areas at a European level. They have also shown, considering the large amount of responses, that there is a great need for information about these topics within European educational and non-educational music establishments and by individual professional musicians.

NEWS FROM THE *PROMUSE* WORKING GROUP ON PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION

KEEPING TRACK OF FORMER STUDENTS

85 Conservatoires within the EU 18 countries have been asked about their methods for keeping track of former students. A common strategy will be developed from all these methods, which can be used by all European music education establishments. Information gathered by this method is an important source of feedback for curriculum development in conservatoires. It seems that most inquiries are not precise enough and they do not give a clear picture of the labour market. Respondents have also stressed the difficulty of getting information on overseas students, past or present, and the need for more information. Conservatoire directors and staff members showed great interest in the project during the special working group sessions about this topic at the AEC conference in November '99 in Bucharest. Directors of some schools with experience in this area explained how this kind of investigation could be useful in adjusting the curricula. American schools also shared their highly professional approach of tracking students, which required up to 2 or 3 full-time people and in some cases the help of current students.

ORCHESTRAS

Conservatoires have expressed a need to know more about how to prepare their students for employment in professional orchestras. They should have access to objective and authoritative data about the current employment situation in the orchestral world, and the criteria for entry into the profession. For this reason many conservatoires have shown a willingness to develop working relationships with orchestras. The crucial time for students is the point at which they leave the conservatoire and enter the professional world, and orchestral recruitment therefore seems to be an appropriate area to study. Recruitment has been approached from two angles: questionnaires concerning the recruitment of musicians have been sent to orchestras and to (former) students who have already applied for an orchestra position in the EU 18 countries. It was decided that it would be too ambitious to survey all orchestral instruments and therefore the study is concentrating on the oboe, french horn and violin.



The results of these questionnaires will provide music education establishments with a clear overview of the practices and needs of orchestras within the EU 18 countries and - if necessary - training can be adapted and the co-operation between orchestras and educational establishments can be strengthened.

EUROPEAN OBSERVATOIRE FOR MUSIC PROFESSIONS

A start has been made in collecting existing data held by various national organisations, networks and government bodies on different levels. This initial survey has shown that although an enormous amount of data has already been gathered by hundreds of different organisations in different countries, the data have mostly been collected for specific purposes, and are therefore hardly relevant on a European scale. Language also presents a problem. In order to establish a common European methodological and statistical approach and to avoid the development of many disparate organisations, it is vital to have a strong united organisation. The creation of an Observatoire for Music Professions is essential for all those concerned with the professional integration of musicians. The aim of the Observatoire should be to optimise the international career potential of professional musicians through

- the provision of internationally collected and updated information and documentation with regard to all subjects related to both education and professional practice;
- its ability to link up and draw conclusions from the information available. This determines its potential function as an international advisory body on specific profession-related topics and executor of profession-relevant research;
- assistance/support in the process of international homogenisation of diplomas and conditions of employment within the music profession.

NEWS FROM THE **PROMUSE** WORKING GROUP ON CONTINUING EDUCATION

The continuing education working group has devoted itself to work on statistical research and the development of tools and policies with regard to continuing education in music at a European level. After defining the term 'continuing education', several questionnaires were sent out to conservatoires throughout the EU. To find out about existing provision and needs within the sector for professional musicians, three areas are being studied: conservatoires, other continuing education providers (employers, unions, etc.) and former students. Two questionnaires have been developed: one for providers and one for former students. Before the start of *Promuse*, a preliminary AEC survey of conservatoire principals and students outlined four important areas, which have been taken as the starting point for the questionnaires. These areas are performing, pedagogy, life skills and information exchange. Questions have been formulated in such a manner that a follow-up in the future will be possible. In addition to these two questionnaires, a third one about staff development needs has been developed, because the role of staff is pivotal in teaching students to learn and to connect with the outside world. The initial results of the questionnaires have shown that there are many shortcomings within the current state of staff development and continuing education. In some of the EU 18 countries these issues are barely acknowledged.

THE **PROMUSE** PILOT PROJECTS

Initial results are being used as input for the three pilot projects in the second period of *Promuse*, during which national policies - and later on even common policies - will be developed. The working group has already planned the contents of three pilot projects:

- 1** Continuing education: focus groups with music employers, conservatoire representatives, other continuing education providers, government representatives/policy makers and former students from Austria will discuss various topics concerning continuing education. Organised at the University of Music and Performing Arts in Vienna (Austria), May 19/20 2000;
- 2** Continuing education: organised according to the same method at the Conservatoire 'E. Martinez Torner' in Oviedo (Spain) in June or July 2000;
- 3** Staff development: this pilot aims to develop a common policy/attitude towards staff development within European conservatoires. The Sibelius Academy Continuing Education Centre will host this session in Helsinki (Finland) in December 2000.

The results of these pilot projects will be combined with the results of the questionnaires for the *Promuse* Final Report. The *Promuse* topics will also be discussed during the annual AEC Conference in November, which will this year be held in Vicenza (Italy). The overall results should provide music education institutes and other music institutes (such as employers and/or continuing education providers) with:

- a clear overview of the current state of and the latest developments in continuing education in music at a European level,
- an analysis of the current continuing education needs that exist in the professional music world,
- suggestions for common policies for staff development and continuing education and proposals and materials for innovative curriculum development.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE MORE INFORMATION

OR DISCUSS ANY ASPECT OF **PROMUSE**, PLEASE CONTACT

SANNE POSTHUMA, **PROMUSE** ADMINISTRATOR, OR MARTIN PRCHAL

AT THE NORTH NETHERLANDS CONSERVATOIRE

VEEMARKTSTRAAT 76 • 2595 CA • GRONINGEN • THE NETHERLANDS

FAX +31.50.3131591 • E-MAIL s.posthuma@pl.hanze.nl
