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Economic Pressures and Organizational Restructuring in the European Classical Music Live Performance Sector (2020–2025)

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Abstract

The European classical music live performance sector has faced unprecedented economic pressures in recent years, driven by post-pandemic recovery challenges, inflation, and cuts in public cultural funding. These pressures have profoundly impacted the sector’s structure, influencing the survival, adaptation, and strategic positioning of its key organizations. This study examines how economic pressures reshape the organizational architecture of the sector between 2022 and 2025. Applying a qualitative, indicator-based document analysis, the research synthesizes evidence from over 30 policy reports, statistical datasets, and institutional publications at the European and national levels. Thirteen indicators were developed to capture critical dimensions of economic stress, including public funding stability, revenue diversification, cost inflation, labor precarity, and market demand. Findings reveal a pattern of accelerated consolidation, increasing inequality between urban and peripheral institutions, and a rise in organizational exits, with small and independent organizations disproportionately affected. While some networks demonstrate resilience through collaboration and innovation, the overall trend points to growing centralization and structural fragility. These results provide valuable insights for policymakers and cultural managers seeking to design sustainable funding schemes and adaptive strategies for the performing arts.

Keywords: Adaptation; Classical Music; Economic Pressure; Organizational Structure; Performing Arts