GUIDE

TOURING, PROGRAMMING, AND FUNDING BIG TOPS IN EUROPE



ARTCENA

ARTCENA is the National Center for Circus, Street and Theatre Arts, supported by the French Ministry of Culture. It coordinates Circostrada and is a permanent member of its steering committee. It works in close collaboration with professionals in the sector and offers them both publications and digital ressources via its web platform. It also develops mentoring and training actions, tools and services to help them in their everyday practices. It supports contemporary creation through national support programs and encourages the international development of these three sectors.

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CIRCOSTRADA

EUROPEAN NETWORK FOR CONTEMPORARY CIRCUS AND OUTDOOR ARTS

Circostrada is the European Network for contemporary circus and outdoor arts. Created in 2003 with the core mission of furthering the development, empowerment and recognition of these fields at European and international levels, over the years the network has become an important anchoring point for its members — 153 organisations from over 42 countries — and a key interlocutor in the dialogue with cultural policy makers across Europe.

ABOUT CIRCOSTRADA AND ARTCENA

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In a few words, Circostrada is:

- A community of contemporary circus and outdoor arts professionals linked together by common values and aspirations, who advocate for greater recognition and more structured cultural policies.
- The voice and reference network of contemporary circus and outdoor arts in Europe.
- A group of passionate and committed individuals who meet several times a year at the network's events.
- A network dedicated to its members, engaged in facilitating the exchange of experiences, knowledge, and good practices at European and international levels.
- A digital resource platform that provides thematic publications, observation tools and news on contemporary circus and outdoor arts, available to all free of charge in English and French.

www.circostrada.org

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INTRODUCTION



A word from the Circostrada network

This guide is the result of SPARK, a transdisciplinary laboratory organised by Circostrada, in collaboration with Festival Circolo, which took place on 28 and 29 April 2022 in Tilburg, in the Netherlands.

This first edition of SPARK[1] - dedicated to the future of big tops in Europe - follows in the steps of a series of meetings that brought together several European circus festivals working with big tops (notably during the Biennale Internationale des Arts du Cirque - BIAC, in Marseille, France, and Festival Circolo, in Tilburg, Netherlands) and took place mainly before the COVID-19 pandemic.

In order to breathe new life into these exchanges and define common actions to support and improve the European circulation of big tops and shows created under big tops, we decided to bring together a very diverse group of around twenty participants, including Circostrada members (festival directors and producers), artists (invited by Circostrada members), as well as architects and designers.

For two days, hosted by Theater De Nieuwe Vorst, we shared innovative practices, stories of failure and success, and inspired by these exchanges we set about imagining the future of big tops, while exploring new possibilities for the mobility of contemporary circus works created under big tops. At the end of this transdisciplinary laboratory, we came up with a list of recommendations; the guide you are reading right now stems out from it.

A word from the authors

When Circostrada approached us with the opportunity to co-write this guide, we were touched by this lovely invitation and excited about the prospect of collaborating on such an exciting topic. However, over the weeks of research, we quickly realised that the task would be much more complex than we had initially imagined due to the multitude of challenges that artists, companies, programmers, and funding bodies face when working with big tops. It is for this reason that we have developed a guide that prioritises easy access to knowledge for those entering the world of big tops for the first time.

This guide is structured with a strong emphasis on practicality, delivering insights into administrative, logistical, and financial aspects. The content is derived from European laws and regulations but is presented in a clear and comprehensible manner (Chapter 2). Throughout the guide, we have included "top tips" (identified by coloured inserts), which provide essential tools to tackle specific challenges. To provide a wider range of perspectives, we have sought the contributions of experts to write articles on the values of big tops (Chapter 1) and on specific issues they have personally experienced (Chapter 3). Finally, a broader group of experts has been invited to share *their* "top tips": concise advice on lessons learned from their experiences under big tops so that you do not repeat the same mistakes as those who came before you (Chapter 4).

It is important to note that this guide was not designed to be read linearly, but rather as a tool to keep at hand and consult when encountering a specific problem. We encourage you to immerse yourself in the experts' insights now, and to regularly refer to the guide's table of contents to identify the topics covered. Remember that when you face a challenge, this guide may be able to provide you with the answers you need.

Déborah Boëno and Axel Satgé

1 To find out more, you can read a blog article written by Nikolaos Verginis and/or listen to the podcast produced by Maaike Muis.

Déborah Boëno

Deborah first worked as a producer for a Scène Conventionnée in France, before devoting herself entirely to supporting artists since 2017. She joined the circus collective Cheptel Aleïkoum for the distribution and production of their projects. She then worked as a support officer for circus and outdoor arts at ARTCENA (National Center for Circus, Street and Theater Arts), an organisation with which she remains involved by offering professional training. Since 2022, she has once again devoted herself to supporting artists and in particular the Franco-Belgian Collective Les Malunés, MMFF - Mathieu ma Fille Foundation and Compagnie 1-0-1.

Axel Satgé

Axel has worked in the contemporary circus sector internationally for over fifteen years. He discovered contemporary circus with artists like Circa Tsuica, Compagnie XY, and Phia Ménard while in charge of production at the Halles de Schaerbeek in Brussels. In 2014, he moved to London to work with Crying Out Loud and organised UK and international tours for artists like Cheptel Aleïkoum. Since 2019, he is a freelance producer working with artists such as Nikki & JD and Laura Moy. He is also an international development and tour booking manager for Gandini Juggling and The Place.

Thanks

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Those who shared their top tips: Simon Bruyninckx, Rachel Clare, Manon Durieux, Eugénie Fraigneau, Lou Henry, Luke Hallgarten, Tom Neal, Paul Ribiere and those who wished to remain anonymous.

And a special thank you to Archie Williams for his invaluable assistance in translating this guide into English.

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1

THE VALUES OF THE BIG TOP



In this first part of the guide, we spoke with six professionals - artists, programmers and government officials - who have gained invaluable expertise working with big tops. Their knowledge and insightful perspectives allowed us to explore in depth the values that underpin their commitment to the circus tent, as well as their vision for the future.



1 ARTISTS

Interview with Sade Kampilla, co-founder of Circus I love you and Tom Rack, co-founder of NoFit State.

Why do you favour creation under big tops in your artistic approach?

Sade Kampilla : We create shows combining acrobatics and live music, which we present to a large audience. The big top is the best place to showcase acrobatics. On a circular stage, we can gather as many spectators as possible to watch the show. Traditionally, the big top has always been the ideal place to develop circus disciplines. However, the range of disciplines has evolved, artists now seek to perform in covered places: acrobats especially favour disciplines requiring few or no hanging devices and/or not requiring a lot of space. In a big top, we don't need to restrict our acrobatic and artistic vocabulary.

The authenticity of the circus is essential. The acrobat does not pretend to perform a somersault, he actually performs it. What the audience sees happens in real life, with real people and not fictional characters. Performing with the audience all around us makes them and their reactions a visible part of the show, beyond the actions taking place on stage. This reinforces the feeling of authenticity that we wish to highlight with Circus I love you.

When they enter a big top, spectators have specific expectations. Most of them come to have a good time, to give their children an exciting experience, to be amazed and surprised. It is truly fascinating to create shows that reflect our vision of the circus while guaranteeing the audience the good time they came for.

Ecology is an essential aspect of our work. By owning our own big top, we have the ability to run consistent tours, as we can host events ourselves when we are not scheduled by a festival or theatre. We have a real-time view of the environmental impact of our activities through our bank account. By taking care of logistics, we can continuously optimise it. This includes reducing the number of vehicles on tour, exclusively using LED lighting and providing vegan meals for the team. Additionally, we strive to minimise travel times by filming for several months at a time during the warm season. Accommodation is provided in caravans next to the big top, creating a 'home away from home' feeling for all participants, including those with families wishing to join the tour. In this way, the circus becomes a sustainable and inclusive living environment for all its actors, even when travelling.

Tom Rack : There is something unique and special about the circus community that lives according to the travelling tradition of the big tops and on the fringes of traditional society. We live and travel together, we create our show together, we eat and love and laugh together, we face the elements and the world together, and literally, we entrust our lives to each other every day. This shared sense of purpose, connection, and trust creates a spirit and energy that shines through our work, and we like to think that gives it a heart and soul.

The big top has a mystical and timeless aura, a feeling of “other”. When we invite the public into the big top, they leave their comfort zone and enter our world where the extraordinary and the incredible are commonplace. Already, they are abandoning their prejudices and leaving their reality behind. They are excited, ready to be amazed and entertained. It is in this space where their minds open that we can use our storytelling and themes with powerful impact.

From a practical point of view, having our own big top allows us to have complete control over our environment and to build our shows and systems specifically tailored to each venue and performance. We then have the luxury of taking our site with us wherever we go. The dome and king posts give us opportunities not found in a building to carry out complex technical installations, and the height in the centre creates an almost cathedral-like space.

We chose to place our seats in a complete circle around a 13-metre round stage, like a traditional circus ring. Having the audience all around removes the concept of the “fourth wall” and creates a more immersive space. As there is no front or back, all the seats are the same, and the space becomes truly democratic, with the audience on all sides becoming in some way part of the performance.

There is no doubt that working in the travelling big top tradition is not just a job, it is a way of life. When the sun is shining and the big top is full, there's no better way to live.

How do you approach the issue of territorial mobility with a travelling structure?

Sade Kampilla : I believe that a circus focused on acrobatics has no choice but to travel. Renewing the skills of an acrobat takes years. Thus, it is more sustainable to look for new audiences to present the existing show to, rather than creating a new show for the same audience several times a year. Travel is therefore a necessity created by the nature of our practice.

The key is to make our trips as consistent as possible. Since our artists come from all over Europe, it is not possible to move the entire circus for a single remote performance. We organise our tours which last from one month to six

months, staying at least a week in each city. This approach allows us to control our costs and travel times, provide more stable employment for our team, and offer organisers manageable rates.

Since 2016, we have been working with team members from 13 different countries. The language of acrobatics is universal. We want to celebrate the absence of language barriers with our audiences, which is why we choose not to include text in our performances. Circus is an internationally understandable art form that anyone with a body can relate to.

Our link with the “local territory” is temporary. If we were to perform locally, what "local character" should we choose? How much time would I have to spend in Finland to be considered "local physically"? As we travel around Europe, we visit the home countries of most of our team members. Our circus is based in Sweden, but we only have one Swedish person on the team. Many of our team members do not have a fixed place of residence; the big top itself constitutes their most stable anchor point. We often face the challenge of not being considered local enough to attend an event or apply for certain opportunities.

Tom Rack : Touring under a big top allows us to travel absolutely anywhere, all we need is a flat space, access to water and an audience. We can set up on an abandoned lot in the city centre and bring an empty lot to life, or play in a beautiful park or festival site. We can bring our show to places and communities where artistic and cultural offerings are limited, and the circus attracts an audience under the big top who would not otherwise attend a theatre. It’s an art form that transcends generational and cultural boundaries, with something for everyone, at every level.

It is a source of pride for us to know that the same show that is performed at major international festivals is also performed in working-class communities across England and Wales. The transient nature of the circus performer makes it a truly international community, and this melting pot brings a wide diversity of cultural influences and lived experiences, making the experience richer and more diverse.

As the circus is a visual medium, it goes beyond the need for language. We use music and singing to create the emotional mood and colour of a scene, and the physicality of the performance does the rest, making the work universally accessible and understandable across borders. A large big top like ours is complex to manage and we are always trying to establish geographically sensitive tour itineraries. Brexit has added a whole new level of complexity and cost for everyone, but we are determined to continue showcasing our work to our audiences in Europe.

> **How do you approach distribution on a European scale?**

Sade Kampilla : Is it easy to tour Europe? I don't know, I don't have anything else to compare it to. Working in a sector where there is a lot of competition, like the arts, nothing seems easy. However, many succeed. I would say that the European Union has done a pretty remarkable job of making cross-border travel easier, and finding information about regulations and working in the EU is pretty straightforward. However, on a practical level, it is necessary to speak the language of most of the places you visit or to have a collaborator who speaks our language. You also need to adapt to the development stage and status of each country's circus. In Western Europe, we mainly work with events, festivals, and theatres that book our show. In the Nordic countries, event organisers capable of hosting a circus tent are rare, so we mainly organise our own tours there.

We are learning more and more how political decisions make the life of travelling circuses more or less difficult. We would like more transparency regarding space rental prices, and fair regulations regarding big tops, temporary structures, events, etc., as it is easy to be sidelined by a city charging extravagant fees and/or safety measures for the circus installation.

The big top tour requires a strong commitment. We figured that if we chose this life, we have to create shows in our big tops for many years to come. If this wasn't a long term plan, it wouldn't be worth the effort it takes.

Audience reactions to our shows are very similar in all the countries where we perform. Before the show, many people wonder if the clown will be funny, or what animals they will see (we have no animals or clowns). As they left the big top, even though the show wasn't exactly what they expected, it was clear to them that they had witnessed a circus show. We happily play the role of bridge builders between popular and less accessible shows, between art and entertainment. There is room and demand for a multitude of different circuses around the world.

Tom Rack : Both Brexit and Covid have had a huge impact on our ability to organise tours in Europe. We are lucky to have long-standing relationships with some European festivals and their audiences, and they are always happy to welcome us when we have a new show. However, that certainly didn't make things any easier.

In general, places that can accommodate big tops are much better equipped in Europe and have been planned at the urban planning stages. The UK could really benefit from this approach, as it can be difficult to obtain planning permission and few places have electricity, water and drainage, adding to the complexity and carbon cost. If more locations were better equipped, the circus could tour more sustainably through better route plan-

ning and without having to use generators and chemical toilets. It doesn't take much for a city to be able to host circuses and be used efficiently and easily, but so often it seems like they are doing their best to make it difficult for us.

It's great to see so many young companies taking up big top touring and enjoying the creative and cultural freedom it brings. More circus in more places can only grow the circus spectator base and open up more possibilities, thus perpetuating the growth of the art.

The biggest challenge facing the sector is that as an industry that relies on so much travel and frequently needs to use generators, how can we achieve carbon neutrality soon? With our budgets and margins so low, it's difficult to prioritise spending on switching to green fuels, switching entirely to LED lighting, investing in micro-generation[1] on site, and it will be a while before electric vehicles are affordable for us. We must at every opportunity take small steps towards this goal, we cannot wait for change, we must promote it.

1 Micro-generation, also known as micro-energy, is the small-scale production of energy at the household, small business or local government level and generally involves the use of renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind, hydraulic or biomass energy, to generate electricity or heat in a decentralised manner. The main idea behind micro-generation is to enable individuals or communities to become energy producers, rather than simply consuming energy from centralised power grids.

Sade Kampilla is the co-founder of Circus I love you. Circus I love you creates acrobatics and live music shows that generate excitement and inspire audiences to take action. The Circus I love you show premiered in France in 2018 and has been performed more than 130 times across Europe since. 2020 was spent building a smaller circus to tour exclusively in the Nordic countries, leading to the first tour of "Utopia" in Sweden in 2021. In 2022, two new shows were created: "I love you two" for the big top and "Beauties" for the smaller one.

Tom Rack is the co-founder of NoFit State. NoFit State was founded in 1985 by five friends who were passionate about juggling, street performance and alternative lifestyle. They bought their first (mini) big top in the 90s and toured with what was then the 'new circus' across the UK. From their home in Cardiff, they run numerous community projects and social circus programs, whilst touring many countries. Over the past ten years, NoFit State's touring productions have visited 19 different countries, performed to over 460,000 spectators, while receiving rave reviews and winning numerous prestigious international awards in the arts.

2 PROGRAMMERS



Interview with Yveline Rapeau, director of the Plateforme 2 Pôles Cirque en Normandie in France and Jiří Turek, director of the festival Letní Letná in Czechia.

Why did you decide to include circus tents in your programme?

Yveline Rapeau : When I think about what makes big top shows truly special and significant, several aspects immediately come to mind. To start, there's the unmistakable presence of the tent itself, which lends an extraordinary quality to these performances. This tent serves a dual role as both the stage for the show and an integral part of the show's setting. This distinctiveness creates an entirely different dynamic compared to indoor performances. The tent establishes its own aesthetic, not only within the performance space, but also in the public areas surrounding it. This spatial aesthetic is a fundamental element of contemporary circus, and nothing can quite replace the unique experience it offers, largely thanks to the tent's singularity.

A third element, closely intertwined with the previous two, revolves around the unique relationship that a big top circus establishes with its audience. It fundamentally alters the way in which the public engages with the artistry. These interactions represent two distinct experiences: the audience's connection with the artistic work diverges from what occurs in a traditional theatre setting. As a programmer, I find that our engagement with the audience beneath the big top complements our experiences in conventional theatres. Additionally, there's a notable aspect of conviviality. While theatre venues have their bars and cafes, they can't quite replicate the warmth and genial atmosphere that the big top effortlessly provides.

Yet, another inherent element involves the setting itself. Even if a big top is pitched right outside a theatre entrance, the experience inside is completely different. I, personally, have a strong attachment to the bold creative expression of contemporary circus, but I also deeply value the symbolic importance of the big top. Like many of us, I associate the big top with the essence of the circus, and I'm keen on preserving this symbolism. I consistently strive to convey that circus arts transcends the big top and that we must challenge this caricature. Simultaneously, I relish the opportunity to revive the antiquated symbolism and imagination associated with the circus.

Lastly, there's the aspect of territorial engagement. In France, we have the opportunity to collaborate with other cultural institutions or local authorities to bring big tops to places beyond our own town. The tent provides a platform for presenting ambitious artistic projects in regions that may have limited or no capacity to host such cultural offerings.

Jiří Turek : The Letní Letná festival was created in Prague in 2004 so that I could present *Grimm*, a show by Daniel Gulko and his new company Cahin Caha. *Grimm* came with a large 30 metre big top. While the show was there, we added another smaller tent, some outdoor shows, and children's performances. And people liked it! This is how the festival was born, and we managed to continue it in the following years. We are already celebrating our 20th anniversary this year (2023, Ed.), just like Circostrada.

For me, a circus tent has more charm than a theatre or a street performance, and I think the same is true for the audience. There is a touch of romanticism: the public has the artists at their fingertips. They see their sweat, their mistakes. Also, under the canvas of the big top, they realise how difficult this circus is, and they experience adrenaline and emotions.

We try to present the best contemporary artists and companies while simultaneously creating a total experience for the audience. Not just during the show, but also before and after. The whole site should have an atmosphere: festoon lights, snacks and bar areas, rest areas, etc. We devote a lot of time and energy to creating such a poetic atmosphere.

All these elements are why the public likes to come to our festival. They spend more time here than just during the show; they make appointments here and come back to us more than once. For the positive atmosphere, informality and natural simplicity.

Big tops are expensive and logistically challenging. Why are you invested in defending big tops?

Yveline Rapeau : Circus performances under a big top are often perceived as expensive, but in reality, they are more affordable than one might think. Of course, the tent itself incurs a cost, but upon closer examination of operating budgets, this aspect is generally overstated. Furthermore, in terms of logistics, touring teams under tents are usually self-sufficient when it comes to accommodation. For instance, it is often less expensive than lodging artists in hotels. It's essential to consider the overall costs, including the logistics of the itinerant life of the artists. In today's indoor circus shows, there are often ambitious stage setups, elaborate sets, and heavy equipment. While these expenses differ, comparing the overall costs is crucial to get an accurate picture of the situation. It's time to break stereotypes and provide concrete examples.

Simultaneously, current environmental concerns compel us to think about the costs associated with hosting big tops in winter or summer. Heating or

air conditioning a big top can indeed be costly, and these costs depend on the chosen performance season. By scheduling shows during spring and autumn, one can avoid the peaks of summer heat or harsh winter cold, reducing the need for intense heating or cooling of the tent. This approach helps lower operating costs while having a lower environmental impact. It's important to optimise operations to offset costs while providing a quality experience for the audience and addressing the added value for the audience I mentioned earlier.

Regarding touring, my approach is to prioritise partnerships in distribution, allowing for cost-sharing and promoting cooperation and collaboration among cultural stakeholders and local authorities. This approach allows for shows to travel to less-served areas and provides the opportunity to present more ambitious artistic works. Local authorities can also allocate specific grants for these territorial initiatives. Additionally, at the Cirque-Théâtre d'Elbeuf, I ensured a dedicated space where a big top is regularly set up. It's part of the region's culture and essential for rallying around the project. However, a strong partnership is crucial for an installation outside the usual area. This partnership must go beyond mere financial agreements. It should involve thorough preparation to define the roles and responsibilities of each party, especially concerning logistics, setup and teardown, audience reception, and ticketing. Preparing at least a year in advance with local regions and artistic teams is essential to ensure the success of the installation. When this preparation is well-executed, the installation of the big top can extend beyond a one-time distribution and become genuine ownership of the project by the region, offering numerous benefits for all parties involved.

Similarly, embracing the uniqueness of performances under the big top is essential for the theatre team. I ensure that the project is tangible, practical, and inspires a willingness to take on the challenge of setting up in a different region. Moreover, it's an opportunity for the team to establish a different relationship with the audience and the artistic team, a relationship characterised by the friendliness inherent in the big top.

Jiří Turek : Owning and operating a big top is very expensive. It's difficult to build, to transport, to store. However, it is definitely worth it. As organisers, we do it precisely to create a different atmosphere, offer other experiences, and bring authenticity. I admire companies with the courage and strength to travel with their own tent. Everyone has to build the tent together, prepare it for the performance, perform, dismantle everything again with their own hands, load everything and take it to the next stage.

I am delighted that these eternal romantics still exist and wander with this mountain of iron and sails in search of the next adventure. I hope that economic demands do not discourage them and that they will not follow the easy path of the majority by playing in theatres. We also invite companies who create for theatres to our festival, but only if we know it's worth persuading them to adapt their show for the big top. This can sometimes be very demanding on both sides, both financially and technically.

> **How do you approach your funders regarding projects under big tops?**

Yveline Rapeau : Local authorities swiftly embraced this project when we presented the above arguments. Each year, we organise a show under a big top in a remote area, and for the past 6 or 7 years, we have received dedicated funding for this initiative. Concurrently, we have other big top shows in our budget, and our backers, including local authorities, the State, and our board of directors, steadfastly support us because we are deeply engaged with and contribute to the community.

I never felt the need to wage an excessive battle in defence of big tops because they are integral to fulfilling our overarching mission. Over time, we've crafted compelling strategies and carried out ongoing educational efforts with our funding partners. Convincing our backers remains a challenge, but my focus is on highlighting the merits of circus tents, particularly by demonstrating how they cater to diverse aesthetics and how their cost is not as prohibitive as some might assume.

Over the next 10 to 15 years, it is imperative that we continue to raise awareness among public authorities regarding the challenges of touring circus performances under the big top. We must ensure the longevity of this artistic form because it contributes to the diversification of circus practices. We should draw upon successful experiences and collaborate in the realm of cultural engineering to save time. It is essential to dismantle the preconceptions surrounding the big top and regard it as an opportunity to be shared with as many people as possible, especially through meetings and the exchange of experiences, particularly with programmers who may already possess solutions to the challenges posed by this mode of artistic expression.

In the landscape of contemporary circus, the paramount challenge in the forthcoming years for the big top is to ensure its preservation. It must continue to be one of the cornerstones of diversity in aesthetics, audience relationships, the circumstances faced by artistic teams, and the methods of engagement with local partners - whether they be cultural institutions, unifying local authorities, departments, regions, cities housing cultural entities, or even small rural communities.

This is the pivotal concern: safeguarding the big top from vanishing, as it simultaneously embodies and facilitates all of these facets.

Jiří Turek : During the first years of the Letní Letná festival, it was challenging to find sponsors. Most of the time, we only get small amounts through more personal contacts. Convincing new sponsors was complex and difficult. In Czechia, there is a huge tradition of traditional circus with horses, bears and clowns, and no one (except a few people from the theatre world) knew about contemporary circus. When they heard the word "circus" (even if it was a "new" circus), the public authorities imagined the traditional circus.

Today, the situation is completely different. We managed to "educate" the public, to make them passionate about contemporary circus and not to be afraid of the big top. It is the same with public authorities. Today, we are in a completely different position. We can negotiate partnership terms, longer-term cooperation and higher amounts more confidently. Even large commercial companies realise that big top entertainment and all contemporary circuses have enormous potential and that their support will give them an excellent reputation. But the road to today has been long and difficult.

Yveline Rapeau is the director of the 2 Pôles Cirque in Normandie platform.
In 1990, she joined the La Villette prefiguration project team. In 2006, she was commissioned by Bernard Latarjet, then president of the La Villette public establishment, to rebuild its circus programme. From 2006 to 2011, she accompanied the company Cirque Ici / Johann Le Guillerm for its "Attractions" project. From 2007 to 2011, she programmed the following festivals at La Villette: Des Auteurs des Circus; POP'S, bringing together circus shows and monumental outdoor forms; Hautes Tensions, dedicated to new writings from the circus and urban cultures. In 2012, Yveline Rapeau became director of La Brèche in Cherbourg, a national circus centre mainly dedicated to creation. In 2015, she also took over the management of the Cirque-Théâtre d'Elbeuf, another National Circus Center of Normandy in which she offers around thirty shows per season. She also created SPRING, a festival across Normandy, in partnership with nearly 70 partner venues and municipalities for around 150 performances each year.

Jiří Turek is the artistic director of Letní Letná.
The Letní Letná International Contemporary Circus and Theater Festival is the largest circus event in the Czech Republic. For nineteen years, the festival has locally defined trends in contemporary circus practice and has become an integral part of the annual map of Czech and European cultural events. Since its beginnings, the festival has presented the major international contemporary circus companies. It also regularly supports the local circus scene and offers a rich program for a wide audience. For twenty-one days in August, it offers more than 190 shows to an audience of more than 50,000 spectators (in 2021). Letní Letná takes place in a beautiful park near the historic centre of Prague.

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3 FUNDERS



Interview with Bart Caron, MP and president of the Committee on Culture, Youth, Sport and Media in the Flemish Parliament and Frédéric Hocquard, in charge of Tourism and Nightlife at Paris City Hall and President of the National Federation of Communities for Culture (FNCC).

What do big tops symbolise to you, and how does your approach align with the wider cultural policy of your country?

Bart Caron: First and foremost, a few introductory words about cultural policy in Belgium. The circus world in Belgium is shaped by differentiated cultural policies in the country's two communities, Flanders (the Flemish Community) and Wallonia (the French Community, also known as the Wallonia-Brussels Federation).

Each has developed its own approach to support and promote this unique art form. However, they share the same values: support for circus artists, based on the principle that talented artists should have every opportunity and be supported in developing their talent. High-quality circus demonstrates that high-quality artistic productions are appealing to a wide audience. Unlike other artistic disciplines, the circus has evolved from popular entertainment to art. The interdisciplinary nature of circus arts is an exceptional asset. The blend of dance, circus techniques, theatre, music, and performance allows for unique and extraordinary productions. Circus reaches out to people, especially nomadic circus, making it highly accessible.

Since 2008, the Flemish Community has pursued a circus policy in which nomadic circuses and more contemporary forms have their place. There is a Flemish decree on circuses that includes a set of tools to achieve the aforementioned objectives. Support for the circus focuses on production/creation, presentation, participation, reflection, and education, all through multi-year grants and project grants. There are also grants for festivals, training, and international travel. Accompanying policies have been implemented to address various issues, such as stands in municipalities, the Tax Shelter (tax reduction), and a Cultural Award for circus. This has led to a significant professionalisation of circus, making it more contemporary and closely related to other artistic expressions. There are more productions in theatres than under big tops, and we are witnessing an evolution from traditional nomadic circuses to itinerant circuses that are programmed and create contemporary work (e.g., Ronaldo, Collectif Malunés, and others) programmed by festivals and cultural centres. There is an internationalisation of Belgian companies and troupes. Classic nomadic circus, on the other hand, is part of a very different entertainment experience.

In Wallonia, circus policy is less developed, but there is a professional circus school (ESAC) in Brussels, as well as grants for certain creative works and infrastructure.

Flemish circus policy seeks to establish contacts with other authorities, primarily local authorities, within the Wallonia-Brussels Federation (through the Culture-Culture program), as well as with the federal government (for author's rights, artist status, and more). All of this is done through workshops, training days, festivals, companies, and more.

The relationship between cities and municipalities, on the one hand, and circuses, on the other hand, is not always straightforward. Each city or municipality applies its own rules, making it very complicated and uncertain to secure a location. There is a "circus landscape" created by Circuscentrum to navigate the possibilities in Belgium [1].

Persistent stereotypes about itinerant circuses, such as being outdated or not adhering to rules still exist. These stereotypes are primarily the result of the behaviour of "pirate circuses" and low-quality circuses. The rise of contemporary circus is slowly but surely dispelling these prejudices.

Frédéric Hocquard: Touring circus has a rich history in France, adding to the cultural vibrancy of our regions. Its nomadic nature and adaptability allow it to thrive in areas lacking permanent venues. However, it's not a matter of setting up just anywhere; it requires a certain level of technical infrastructure for setup. Municipalities play a pivotal role in granting permissions for installation sites. Unfortunately, this process isn't always straightforward. Sometimes, suitable locations are scarce due to space constraints or hesitation from local authorities. To encourage municipalities to create more spaces for contemporary circuses and enhance the quality of these sites, we collaborate with ARTCENA [2] to assist local authorities in better integrating circus presence into their communities.

Circus encompasses elements of theatre, dance, music, and acrobatics, making it a magical fusion of artistic disciplines. It promotes values of openness to others: these aren't artists from one region settling in another to present their show; instead, they are artists from diverse places showcasing their acts and then moving on. Circus is about travel, about discovering people

1 Circuscentrum - circus landscape: https://circuscentrum.be/en/circus-landscape

2 ARTCENA, France's national centre for circus, street and theatre arts. ARTCENA helps French professionals to implement their projects and build the future of the circus, street and theatre arts. It was created in 2016 from the alliance between the Centre national du Théâtre and HorsLesMurs.

from afar. It also embodies a particular sense of time: that of celebration, whether it's year-end or the summer season. Audiences are particularly receptive during these times. The demand during Christmas is so high that sometimes circuses of mediocre quality take advantage of it, filling their tents without delivering the expected quality.

The FNCC (National Federation of Community of Communes) conducts educational outreach targeting local authorities, including the "Droit de Cité" charter we signed with ARTCENA. This charter aims to facilitate the reception of circus tents and other cultural structures in various territories. It was signed and launched in October 2018. We also regularly organise meetings, such as those held during the last Mayors' Conference in November 2022. Similarly, during the last BIAC (International Circus Arts Biennial) in Marseille, we organised a meeting for elected officials from the southern region to discuss circus-related issues, as well as a meeting with the artistic team. We also address specific issues, as evidenced by our meeting with the 2R2C cooperative in Paris in October 2022, focusing on circus and ecological transition.

Circus continues to grapple with stereotypes, with one of the primary biases being the association with the use of wild animals and their mistreatment. Fortunately, the circus has been undergoing a revolution in recent years, with the elimination of wild animals, which is a positive development. This benefits wild animals by allowing them to regain their freedom or at least experience improved living conditions. Moreover, it has compelled circuses to reevaluate their acts, emphasising quality and scenography. People no longer come to the circus to see wild animals but to be immersed in a story told and performed by acrobats, equilibrists, and clowns.

The second bias revolves around fear of the "other". This prejudice extends to traveller communities and Romani people, who are supposed to have designated reception areas, though they are often lacking. Addressing this issue requires education and dialogue. The state also supports us in this regard through the policies developed by ARTCENA and the establishment of National Circus Poles (*Pôles Nationaux du Cirque*) across the country. However, there is still much work to be done, particularly regarding reception areas in metropolitan areas, which often only exist during Christmas. Yet, the circus is much more than just a year-end show for children.

> **Why do you think supporting your national artists in European distribution and welcoming European teams to your national territory is important?**

Bart Caron: Circus is a unique art form that, while influenced by national traditions, is inherently international. Language barriers are almost non-existent in the circus world; they communicate through visual language rooted in physical skills and creative design.

Even more crucial is that the circus thrives on interaction and collaboration with artists from various backgrounds, whether within the circus realm or other disciplines. Internationalisation in this context translates to enriching and nurturing artistic talent. This benefits the circus arts as a whole and elevates the reputation and image of contemporary circus and its artists.

Furthermore, we aspire for talented circus artists to achieve recognition and acclaim on the global stage, primarily for their own benefit but also to reinforce the circus policy pursued by Flanders.

Lastly, sustaining a career as a professional circus performer is challenging, particularly in a smaller region like Flanders. Circus artists often rely on international opportunities for their livelihood.

Equally significant is the welcoming of foreign circus artists. It serves the same purposes as mentioned earlier, but it also ensures that the audience has access to various performances and experiences, including those from abroad. The diversity of circus shows can never be rich enough to cater to audience interests and preferences.

Frédéric Hocquard: It fosters a valuable artistic and creative exchange that mutually enriches the circus landscape. Many circus companies aspire to tour the continent, although it's not always a straightforward endeavour.

Programmers and the French audience have increasingly high expectations regarding programming diversity. To be candid, their initial inclination may not always lean towards European circus shows. In response to public demand, there is often a tendency to explore options further afield, such as North America (Quebec) or China.

Consequently, a challenge exists in promoting European circus, particularly when considering environmental concerns like carbon footprint.

> **How far have we come and what remains to be done to move towards optimal touring of European itinerant structures?**

Bart Caron: The Flemish government is currently exploring opportunities in the circus sector in France and the United Kingdom. This initiative aims to establish networks comprising programmers, festivals, Flemish artists, and circus companies. These networks are envisioned as the starting point for similar collaborations in various European countries. In these efforts, European-supported organisations like Circostrada and circusnext can play crucial roles in providing support.

Creative centres such as PERPLX, Dommelhof, Circuscentrum, and certain festivals have long served as intermediaries

connecting the Flemish circus scene with international initiatives and companies. They receive government support for this purpose and have established international ties.

However, these efforts remain insufficient. There is a notable absence of multilateral cooperation between national governments and the European Union, with the circus not yet receiving the priority it deserves in this context. This situation must change. What's needed are more targeted European projects, potentially within the framework of Creative Europe, to foster international relations among governments with circus policies. These projects should facilitate investments and subsidies for circus tours. Additionally, the EU itself should work towards better coordination among various governments. This can be achieved through the EU Council of Culture Ministers, which can support and facilitate the development of the European circus scene. Non-governmental organisations also require increased support from the EU. Among these organisations, Circostrada stands out as possibly the most crucial. There are numerous potential initiatives to explore, including artist exchanges, training facilitation, streamlining administrative processes, financing European tours for young creators (particularly covering travel and accommodation costs), establishing a European circus award, and allocating resources for circus infrastructure such as big tops, equipment, and workshops.

Frédéric Hocquard : The dwindling available space for big tops, particularly in crowded metropolises, has not been conducive to the arrival of international companies either. Our territory appears to lack attractiveness in this regard.

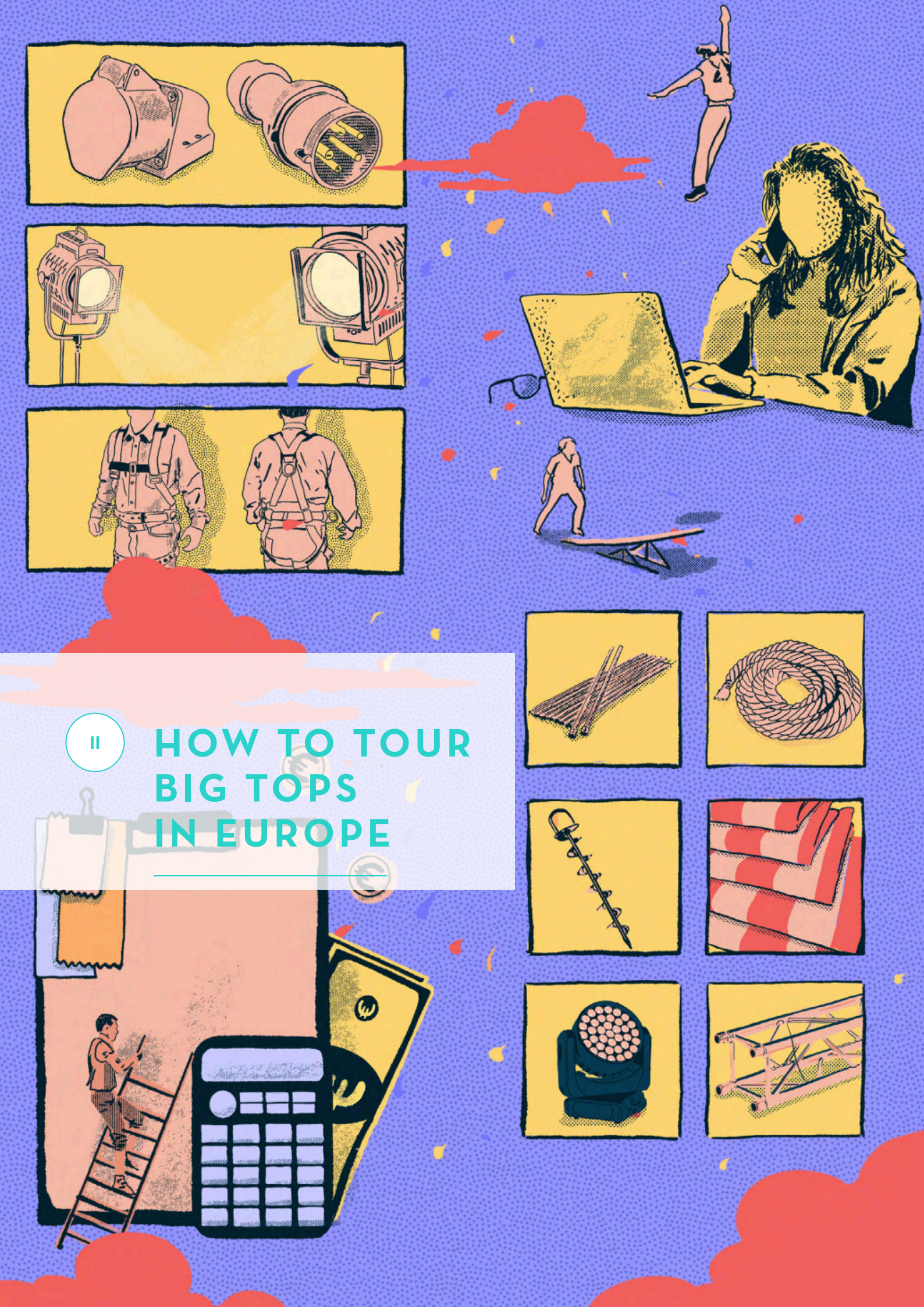
In recent years, one of the most significant developments in the circus world is the shift towards circuses without animals. However, it's worth noting that, especially in major cities like Paris or Lyon, large, artistically unimpressive shows have attempted to replace traditional circuses with animals during year-end festivities.

To address these challenges, there is a need for coordinated efforts among public authorities at the European level, even if formal networks are not yet well-established. These networks and cross-programming initiatives, common in other artistic disciplines such as theatre, dance, and contemporary music, have not fully materialised in the circus domain. Establishing such networks, encouraged by national governments and supported by local authorities committed to these objectives would be beneficial. This would help promote European circuses to the public.

Additionally, while circus festivals are international in nature, there isn't a specific European circus festival. Creating such a festival, modelled after successful initiatives like the one in Liège and offering it to a community with a National Circus Center in its jurisdiction, could be an intriguing idea to promote the art of circus across Europe further.

Bart Caron was a member of parliament and president of the Committee on Culture, Youth, Sport and Media in the Flemish Parliament. Previously, he was chief of staff at the Ministry of Culture to two ministers of the Flemish government. Caron co-founded the circus policy. He was also a cultural official for Kortrijk and coordinator of Bruges 2002 (European Capital of Culture). He is also the author of two books on cultural policy. He is currently working on a doctorate on the subject.

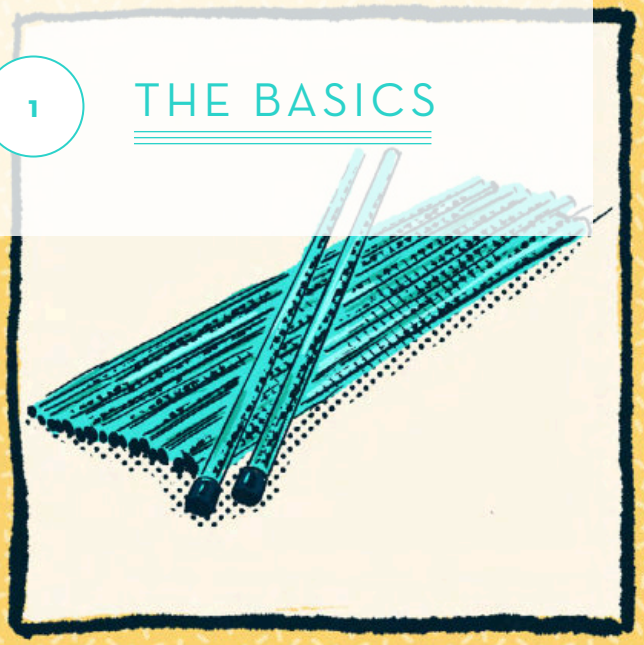
Frédéric Hocquard was elected Councilor of Paris delegated to the night in 2014. He was appointed in October 2017 as deputy to the Mayor of Paris, Anne Hidalgo, in charge of nightlife and the cultural economy's diversity. As such, he is responsible for subjects relating to nightlife, as well as cultural industries, cultural businesses, arts and crafts, contemporary music, outdoor arts, interstitial places and private theatre. The mayor of Paris has once again appointed Frédéric Hocquard as Deputy during his second term in June 2020. He is now responsible for Tourism and Nightlife. Since 2021, Frédéric Hocquard has been President of the National Federation of Communities for Culture (FNCC).

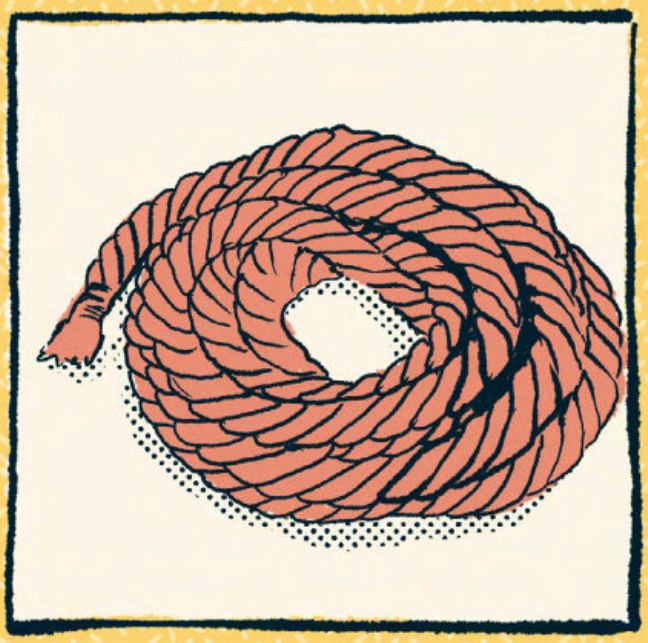


II

HOW TO TOUR BIG TOPS IN EUROPE

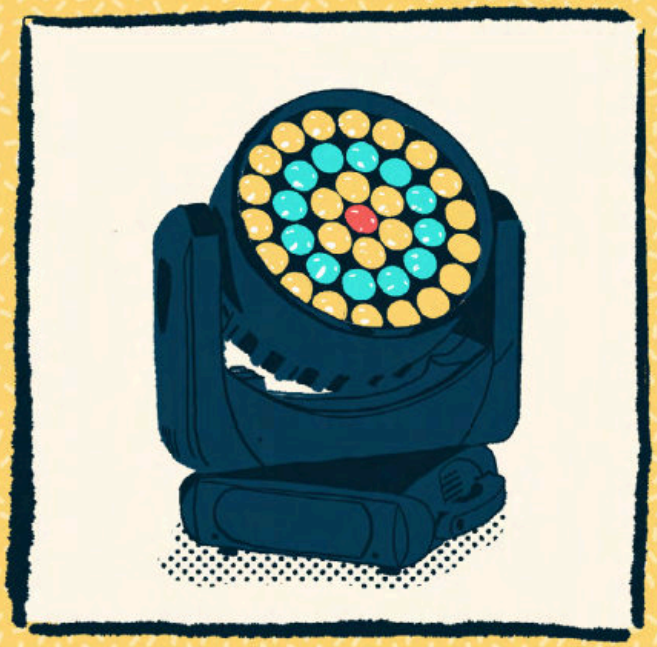
1 THE BASICS

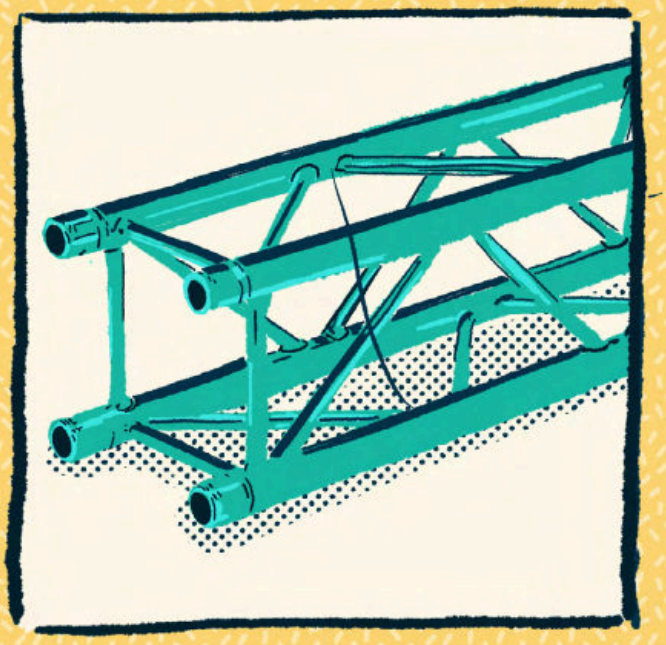












In this first part, we look at the fundamental principles that will be developed in more detail in the following parts of the guide (chapters II.2, II.3, II.4 and II.5). By establishing this foundation, we aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of the essential concepts that underpin the rest of the content in this guide.

As the guide progresses, we'll explore each principle in detail, offering practical information, examples, and strategies to help you apply them effectively in your own context.

The principles presented here are not intended to be isolated concepts, but rather a cohesive framework that works synergistically to enhance your understanding and guide your decision-making process. So, let's embark on this adventure together and lay the foundations for the wealth of knowledge that awaits you in the following chapters.

1.1. The framework

1.1.1. Definition of a big top

While the dictionary defines a big top as a "tent under which travelling circuses give their performances", this guide takes a more comprehensive approach, providing valuable insights for various categories of structures, including:

- **Big top:** an itinerant establishment intentionally designed to be wholly or partially enclosed, typically featuring a soft cover.
- **Tent :** an outdoor shelter designed to accommodate the public and shield them from the sun, wind, and inclement weather. Tents are typically smaller compared to big tops. Examples include yurts, barnums, etc.
- **Travelling structures:** other types of itinerant structures used for shows. This may include trucks, yurts or other innovative solutions that provide mobility and versatility for presenting performances.

In this guide, we will use the terms "big top" and "circus tent" interchangeably for simplicity. These terms encompass the various forms of travelling structures mentioned earlier. We will also refer to the performances in these spaces as "circus performances". It is important to recognise that big tops can host a wide range of artistic expressions beyond traditional circus acts. Therefore, we hope this guide will be equally beneficial to theatre companies, puppetry groups, dance troupes, and other artistic endeavours interested in exploring the possibilities of travelling structures.

1.1.2. Geographical context

This guide is specifically focused on the 27 countries of the European Union and the United Kingdom. We will discuss the applicable regulations, standards, and best practices in these jurisdictions. Please note that the information provided may not apply to other countries outside this geographic area.

The complete list of countries covered by this guide is as follows: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Spain Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, United Kingdom, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden.

1.1.3. Who is this guide for?

This guide caters to three distinct audiences: artists interested in creating or presenting shows in big tops, venues looking to program shows within big tops, and funders seeking to support creating and disseminating works in big tops.

For artists, this guide offers practical advice on creating, managing logistics, and marketing shows in big tops. It also covers relevant legal and regulatory aspects.

For venues, this guide provides insights into programming shows in big tops, including technical considerations, required resources, and potential partnerships to establish.

For funders, this guide addresses questions related to responsibilities when hosting a big top in a town. It offers recommendations on policies and support measures to encourage the creation and distribution of work under a big top. Emphasising the cultural, economic, and social benefits of such initiatives.

Whether you're an artist, programmer, or funder, this guide equips you with valuable information and specific advice to nurture the growth and success of big tops.

1.2. The financial set-ups covered in the guide

This guide focuses on the three most common formats within this space: direct sale, co-production, and self-production. Focusing on these three formats, the guide will provide detailed information and practical advice for each approach. This will help artists, venues, and public authorities better understand and take advantage of these modalities within the framework of creating and distributing works in itinerant structures.

1.2.1. Direct sale

In this case, a show organiser (often a venue or a festival) buys the rights to perform the show from a producer (usually a company). In addition to acquiring these rights, the venue also covers the costs associated with travelling and hosting the team and infrastructure necessary for the smooth running of the show. The organiser will also pay for setting up and running additional tents (when necessary), ticketing, parking, etc.

The venue takes on logistical and financial responsibilities to ensure the successful setup and availability of all necessary elements for the show, including ticket sales and marketing efforts.

In a direct sale arrangement, all ticket revenue goes directly to the show organiser. This arrangement allows the organiser to recoup a portion of the incurred costs and potentially generate additional income. Ticket proceeds can be allocated towards covering the expenses related to hosting the big top, production and promotional costs, and supporting the venue's activities and operations.

Typically, in such contracts, there may be negotiations between organisers and producers regarding the transfer amount, particularly concerning the precise coverage of additional costs borne by the organiser[1].

1 For more information on assignment contracts, see section 2.5 of this guide.

TOP TIP: THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF DIRECT SALES FOR PRODUCERS AND ORGANISERS

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Producer (artists, companies)	The company assumes no financial risk associated with the show's operation. All logistical arrangements are shared with the organiser, thereby reducing the producer's workload.	The fee paid to the producer typically remains constant, regardless of the box office revenue generated. Consequently, the producer does not directly profit from the potential increase in income.
Organiser (venue, festival)	Diverse Programming: The organiser can select from a broad array of shows provided by producers.	High Costs: The organiser must cover the expenses of staging the show, which can result in heightened financial strain, particularly if ticket sales do not sufficiently offset the incurred costs. Logistics Responsibility: As the organiser, they must oversee and handle all logistical aspects of the show, encompassing the hosting of the mobile infrastructure and the coordination of the various facets of the performance. Attendance-Related Risks: The organiser bears the risks connected to audience attendance at the show.

1.2.2. Co-production

Co-production is a hybrid arrangement in which the organiser (the venue hosting the show) collaborates on a show with the producer (the company) without being obligated to pay the fee set by the company. This contract type is frequently used by venues to share the financial risks associated with staging a show.

For instance, the organiser may cover the costs related to hosting the big tops, either fully or partially. However, the organiser does not cover the fee for the show. In this scenario, the revenue generated by ticket sales is divided between the organiser and the producer based on a predetermined percentage, with a minimum guarantee set by the organiser.

The financial aspects of co-production encompass several variables that can vary from case to case. They should be clearly defined during contract negotiations:

- **Fee Payment:** Who is responsible for paying the company's fee? Does the organiser cover the entire fee, or is it the producer's responsibility? Alternatively, is it shared between both parties?

- **Additional Costs:** Who covers the extra expenses associated with the show (travel expenses, on-site costs, accommodation, etc.)? Are these costs shared between the producer and the organiser? If so, how is this distribution determined, and who pays for which portion of the costs?

- **Ticket Revenue Sharing:** What percentage of ticket revenue goes to the organiser and the producer? Is there a minimum guarantee before revenue sharing begins?

It is essential to create clear and mutually acceptable written agreements regarding the financial aspects of co-production. Discussing these details during contract negotiations is vital to avoid potential confusion or disputes later on. When necessary, seeking guidance from experts or consultants can help ensure a complete understanding of the contract terms and the financial implications of co-production.

Furthermore, each organisation should consider developing a comprehensive budget that encompasses all expenses and accurately reflects the financial realities of the co-production. Co-production is a collaborative partnership with shared risks and responsibilities, underscoring the importance of transparency and open communication throughout the collaboration.

TOP TIP: EXAMPLES OF BOX OFFICE SPLITS[1]

- **1. Guarantee**
The organiser agrees to pay the producer a fixed sum for his services, regardless of the number of spectators or box office income. Any ticketing revenue above the guaranteed amount goes back to the venue.

- **2. Box office split**
Box office income is shared between the organiser and the producer according to an agreed ratio. An 80:20 split in favour of the company means the company receives 80% and the venue 20% of the ticket revenue. Several ratios can be agreed upon. For example, the producer can receive 60% of the first €10,500 in box office revenue and 70% of any income above this amount.

- **3. Minimum guaranteed**
Box office income is shared between the organiser and the producer according to an agreed ratio. Still, the company benefits from a minimum payment (generally lower than the fee requested). For example, the company can receive €10,000 or 70% of box office income, whichever is greater, regardless of ticket sales.

- **4. Split after guaranteed minimum**
The producer or organiser receives a fixed amount, after which the rest of the box office income is shared according to an agreed ratio. For example, the producer may receive the first €1,500 out of a total box office revenue of €6,000, and the remaining €4,500 is split in a 60:40 ratio, with €2,700 going to the producer, giving them a total of €4,200.

These are just a few examples of the many formats commonly used for sharing box office income. In reality, there are numerous possibilities to consider. Before finalising a contract, it is crucial to thoroughly comprehend the proposed arrangement's financial implications. If you have any doubts or do not fully grasp the ticket-sharing model presented to you, seeking advice is essential.

1 This section is adapted from the guide "Marketing and touring A practical guide to marketing an event on tour" published by Scottish Arts Council, Arts Council of Wales and Arts Council England in 2004

These examples illustrate the flexibility and variety of possible co-production arrangements. The specific terms are defined through contractual agreements between the presenter and the producer, considering each party's unique needs and objectives[1].

TOP TIP: THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF CO-PRODUCTION FOR PRODUCERS AND ORGANISERS

Self-production	Advantages	Disadvantages
Producer (artists, companies)	**Potential for favourable financial outcomes:** Co-production arrangements offer the potential for mutually advantageous financial outcomes. **Skill Sharing:** Artists can tap into the skills and resources of the venue or organiser, gaining access to technical equipment, receiving guidance, obtaining marketing and communication assistance, and benefiting from logistical expertise. **Opportunity for Long-Term Partnerships:** Co-production can create opportunities for establishing enduring partnerships between artists and venues. This can lead to sustained collaboration and mutual growth.	Financial risk sharing **Sharing of responsibilities** By co-producing a show, artists must share responsibilities related to logistics, marketing and organisation of the show. This may represent an additional workload and require close coordination with the venue or organiser.
Organiser (venue, festival)	Financial risk sharing **Complexity of coordination** Co-production involves close coordination between organisers and artists, which can add additional complexity to event management.	Financial risk sharing **Complexity of coordination** Co-directing involves close coordination between organisers and artists, which can add additional complexity to show management.

1.2.3. Self-production

In this format, the emphasis is placed on the independence of producers (artists or companies) who take charge of all stages of the creation, production and marketing of their own shows. They are responsible for all aspects, including logistics, planning, financing and finding sites.

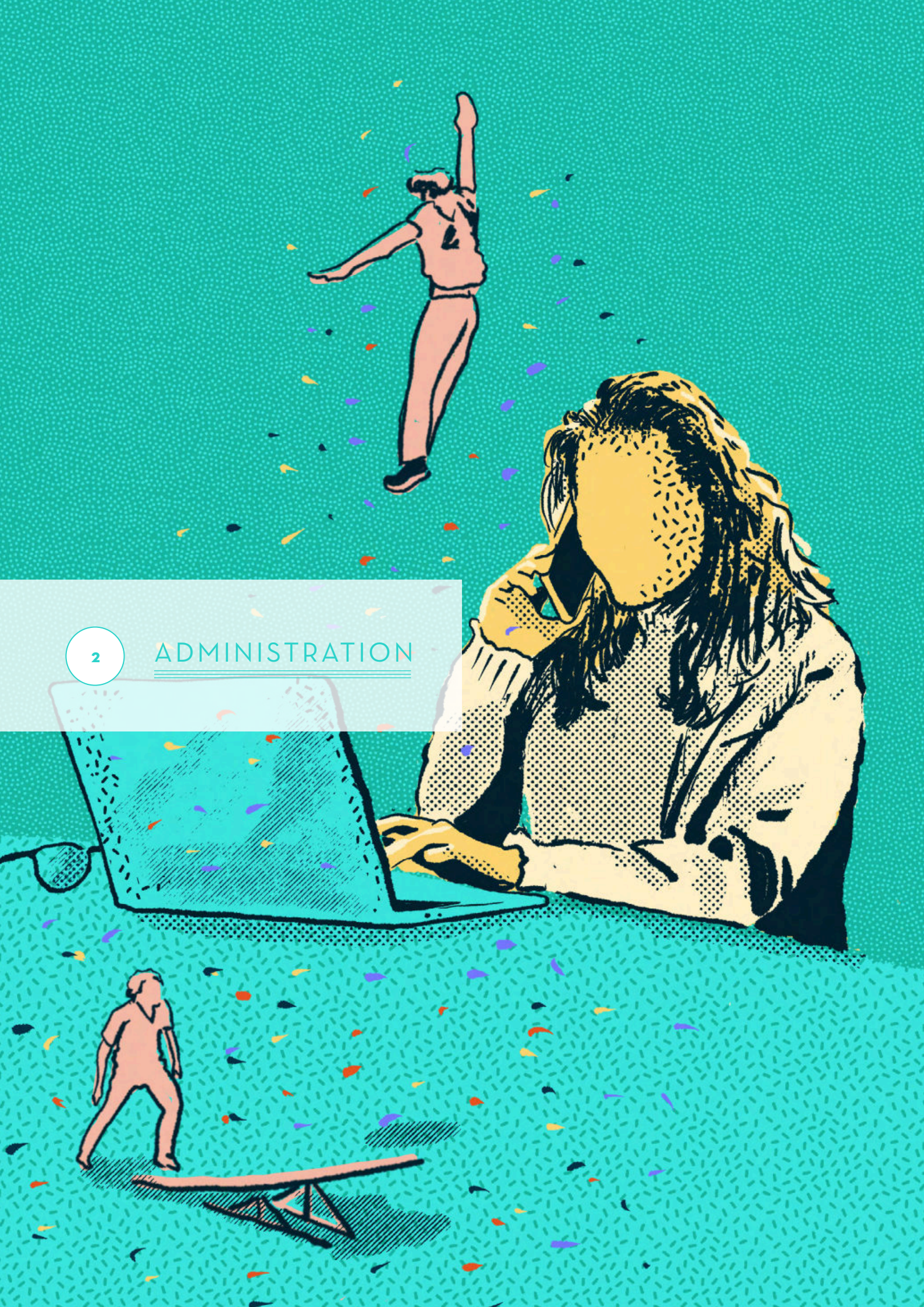
In this context, artists negotiate directly with the towns where they wish to give their performances, independently of any agreement with a venue. They are responsible for finding and coordinating sites, often by establishing partnerships with towns, festivals or other local organisations.

1 For more information on assignment contracts, see section 2.5 of this guide.

In this case, all ticket revenue goes to the producer. This gives producers total control over their income and they benefit directly from it to support their artistic and touring activities. However, they must also bear all costs associated with producing the show and managing the tour.

TOP TIP: THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF SELF-PRODUCTION FOR PRODUCERS AND ORGANISERS

Self-production	Advantages	Disadvantages
Producer (artists, companies)	Full control over the entire process. Potentially greater financial returns than in the context of a direct sale or co-production.	Major financial risk. All implementation logistics, administrative procedures and communication around the show are the producer's responsibility, which can be burdensome for the teams.
Organiser (venue, festival)	Not applicable	Not applicable



2 ADMINISTRATION

In this chapter, we discuss the basic administrative aspects that must be considered when planning tours for touring companies in the European Union and the United Kingdom. By understanding and mastering these key elements, you can successfully navigate the regulatory requirements and administrative formalities inherent in these territories.

Tour planning for circus tents requires careful attention to administrative details to ensure compliance with current regulations to guarantee smooth, trouble-free performance. In this section, we cover topics such as authorisations and permits required for cross-border travel, customs and tax formalities, visa and work permit considerations for artists and staff, as well as the safety and health protocols to be observed.

It is essential to devote particular attention to these administrative aspects to avoid unexpected delays, legal problems or unforeseen obstacles during the tour. By understanding the specific requirements, you will be able to anticipate potential challenges, prepare the necessary documents and put the appropriate processes in place for the smooth execution of your tour.

2.1. Value-added taxes

Big top circus companies touring within the European Union must comply with European tax standards, particularly concerning Value-Added Tax (VAT). This section highlights the key VAT rules to follow.

2.1.1. Definition

Definition of intra-community VAT
The intra-community VAT number is an individual identification number assigned to companies subject to VAT and registered within the European Union. It facilitates and guarantees commercial transactions between companies in the European Union. More precisely, it makes it possible to identify the companies subject to VAT, simplify customs procedures, and monitor and reimburse VAT for deductible VAT.

Which companies are affected by the intra-community VAT number?
All companies that pay VAT and are registered within the European Union must have an intra-community VAT number (see details further down in the article).
Companies not liable for VAT can, if they wish, request the allocation of an intra-community VAT number. Note that this becomes an obligation when providing or purchasing services from professionals established in the EU.

How is the intra-community VAT number determined?
It is issued by the tax administration of the company's country of registration at the time of its registration or declaration of activity.

2.1.2. Rules

This section focuses on the rules around VAT in the context of a sale or co-production. This is an adaptation of the "International Tour" guide available on the ARTCENA website[1].

1 Source: https://www.artcena.fr/artcena-juridique/rubrique/international/tournee-letranger (in French)

2.1.2.1. The company and the foreign organiser are both subject to VAT

When both the service provider (the company) and the service recipient (the venue or festival that invited the company) are liable for VAT, the relevant VAT rate is determined by the location where the service (the performance) is conducted.

The reverse charge mechanism is applied when the service recipient is located within the European Union or the European Economic Area [2] (EEA). This means that the Value Added Tax (VAT) is reported and paid directly by the service recipient in their own country. The invoice from the producer is issued without VAT, and it should clearly indicate that the VAT is the responsibility of the service recipient.

Example: A Spanish theatre subject to VAT buys a show from a Lithuanian company also subject to VAT. It is therefore Spanish VAT which applies to the transfer contract.

2.1.2.2. In the event that only one structure is subject to VAT

In a scenario where a VAT-registered service provider supplies services to a non-VAT registered customer, VAT is applicable based on the location where the service is provided.

Regarding the declaration and payment of VAT, the reverse charge mechanism is not applicable. Therefore, the producer will invoice the service, and the invoice will include VAT.

2.1.2.3. In the case of self-production

The question of where to pay VAT on ticketing revenue for a touring structure within the European Union is determined by the specific VAT regulations that apply to cross-border entertainment services. Here are some key points to bear in mind:

- **General rule**

In accordance with the general rule, VAT on ticketing revenue should be paid in the country where the service is physically provided. This means it should be paid in the country where the performance takes place and where the tickets are sold. Itinerant service providers typically need to register for VAT in their country of establishment and adhere to VAT reporting requirements. This might involve submitting regular reports and settling any VAT liabilities.

- **Special VAT regime for entertainment services**

The European Union has implemented a distinct VAT system for cross-border entertainment services designed to streamline taxation responsibilities for itinerant service providers. Within this framework, providers can opt to pay VAT on ticket revenue in their country of establishment rather than in each country where the show is performed. Itinerant service providers are eligible to choose this specialised VAT regime. Nevertheless, it's essential to note that each country has specific turnover thresholds, and once these thresholds are surpassed, adopting this scheme becomes obligatory. These thresholds differ from one country to another, so it's crucial to review the precise regulations in each relevant country.

It is important to note that VAT rules within the European Union can be complex and may vary from country to country. It is therefore recommended to consult the relevant tax authorities in each relevant country [3] or consult a tax expert for accurate and up-to-date advice on the tax obligations specific to ticketing revenues of a touring structure in the European Union.

2 The member countries of the EEA are the 27 Member States of the EU as well as three of the four members of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), namely: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechia, Cyprus, Croatia, Denmark, Spain, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Iceland, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Sweden.

3 Links to the tax bodies of different European countries: https://taxation-customs.ec.europa.eu/national-tax-websites_en

2.1.2.4. Brexit implications

Typically, when an EU business offers services to a UK business, VAT is applicable in the country where the supplying business is located. Conversely, services provided by a UK company to an EU company often incur VAT in the service provider's country.

Nonetheless, it's important to note that particular rules and exemptions may come into play, contingent on the origin of the company collaborating with the UK. It is advisable to seek guidance from your local and pertinent tax authorities for precise and current information.

TOP TIP: HOW TO CONTINUE WORKING TOGETHER POST-BREXIT?

For more information on UK-EU touring conditions, you can also read "A Practical Guide to Brexit for Outdoor Arts Touring Companies", a guide written by Split Second commissioned by XTRAX and available for free online: https://xtrax.org.uk/resources/a-practical-guide-to-brexit-for-outdoor-arts-touring-companies/

2.2. National Insurance Certificates (A1)

2.2.1. European rules / agreements

In the context of a sale or co-production involving overseas work and a contractual relationship between the producer and the organiser, you often need to request an A1 certificate (or National Insurance Certificate). This document serves as proof of affiliation to the social security system in the country where the workers typically reside.

DEFINITION OF A1

To facilitate the mobility of self-employed workers in Europe, the European Commission has established social security provisions. Depending on whether these self-employed workers operate within a specific Member State, they can, under certain conditions, maintain their affiliation with the Social Security system of their home country.

Within the European Economic Area and Switzerland, self-employed workers who temporarily conduct their usual professional activities outside their home state, in one or more host states, are considered to be in a secondment situation. If the activity carried out outside their country of residence is either permanent or of a different nature while they maintain an activity in their home state, this is referred to as a multi-activity situation.

In both scenarios, it is essential to determine the applicable legislation. To do so, individuals must request a certificate from the competent authority.

The issuance of this certificate allows self-employed workers to remain affiliated with their home state's social protection system, eliminating the need to switch social protection systems. They can continue to pay all their social contributions in their country of residence and benefit from their usual social protection while practising their profession abroad.

2.2.2. Who is affected and where to apply?

The A1 certificate applies to all members of the team, including artists, technicians, and administrators.

To obtain an A1 certificate, the request must be submitted before departure and sent to the relevant social security authority in the home country. The authority will assess each individual's situation and issue the appropriate certificate. Subsequently, this certificate must be presented to the competent authorities in the host country when applying for a work permit or fulfilling other administrative requirements.

It's important to note that the rules and procedures for obtaining the A1 certificate may vary from one country to another. Therefore, it is advisable to contact the competent social security authority in the home country to obtain precise and up-to-date information on the procedure for requesting an A1 certificate in the specific context of a foreign assignment or co-production.

For more details on where to apply for A1 country by country, please refer to this guide published by the European Union: https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/work/unemployment-and-benefits/social-security-forms/contact_points_pd_a1.pdf

TOP TIP: A1 AND SELF-PRODUCTION

Even in the case of self-production, it's generally necessary to provide an A1 certificate in accordance with current regulations.

It's crucial to exercise caution in certain situations. Some municipalities that host your performances may require the presentation of A1 certificates, even for self-produced shows. Therefore, it's highly recommended to verify the specific requirements of each location before commencing the tour.

Furthermore, if you collaborate with a local agent to organise your tour, they may request A1 certificates to comply with their own legal obligations or to streamline administrative processes. In such instances, it's vital to be aware of these requests and take appropriate actions to fulfil the local agent's requirements.

It is advisable to stay informed about the regulations in each country or location where you intend to perform and take the necessary measures to adhere to specific administrative obligations. In cases of doubt or when additional information is needed, seeking guidance from legal advisors or experts in cross-border employment regulations is recommended.

2.2.3. Brexit update

In situations where UK resident teams work abroad, venues may request an A1 certificate to secure their social security coverage. Similarly, when artists residing overseas perform in the UK, venues located in the UK can ask for an A1 certificate to ensure that artists remain affiliated with their country of origin's national social security system.

In the UK, A1 is provided by HMRC (His Majesty's Revenue & Customs).

2.3. Taxes

European regulations do not provide specific guidelines on how to tax the income of European citizens living, working, or staying in another EU country. Nevertheless, the country where you are considered a tax resident typically has the authority to tax your entire global income, including earnings from employment and other sources.

TOP TIP: DETERMINING YOUR TAX RESIDENCY STATUS

Every country has its own criteria for establishing tax residency, but in general:

- You are typically regarded as a tax resident of the country where you spend more than six months a year.
- If you stay less than six months per year in another EU country, you usually maintain tax residency in your country of origin.
- You can only be a tax resident of a single country at any given time.

It's possible that your income may be subject to taxation in two different countries, especially if you are in one of the following situations: residing in one EU country and working in another, or being temporarily posted abroad.

Fortunately, many countries have established double taxation agreements to address this issue:

- In numerous bilateral tax treaties, the taxes paid in the country where you work are subtracted from the taxes you owe in your country of residence.
- In other cases, income earned in the country of employment may be taxed there and exempt from taxation in your country of residence.
- Keep in mind that tax rates in the two countries involved may differ. If the tax rate in your country of employment is higher, that will be the final rate you pay, even if taxes paid in that country are deducted from what you owe in your country of residence or if your country of residence grants you exemptions.

You might need to demonstrate your tax residency and proof of prior tax payments to avoid double taxation. Consult the tax authorities to determine which documents and evidence you need to submit.

Determining where and how to fulfil your tax obligations can be intricate, and you may require assistance from your contacts in the countries where you are establishing your itinerant structure. You are responsible for reaching out to the tax authorities in your country and the countries where you will be touring for guidance on tax matters.

Links to the tax bodies of different European countries:
https://taxation-customs.ec.europa.eu/national-tax-websites_fr

TOP TIP: KNOW WHERE AND HOW TO PAY TAXES WHEN TRAVELLING ABROAD

During contract negotiations, whether you are an artist entering into an agreement with a foreign company or a company establishing a contract with a foreign venue, consider asking the following questions to your contact within the organisation[4]:

- Does the host country have in its legislation provision for a tax for non-resident artists who come to work in this country?
- Does the country's law provide for tax exemption?
- If there is no exemption, is there a bilateral agreement between your country of residence and the country where you will perform your service to avoid double taxation?
- If there is no bilateral agreement between the two countries, what are the rules regarding taxation?
- Is it possible to deduct your expenses from the taxable amount?
- If this is not possible, is it possible to separate the contract between production costs and the fee?

4 This section of the guide is taken from the Artist Taxation in an International Context cookbook published by Pearle*, a comprehensive source of information for finding out about taxation when travelling abroad: https://www.pearle.eu /policyarea/taxation.

In situations where withholding tax is applied, requesting a tax certificate is advisable. This applies even when an agreed-upon net remuneration is in place and tax payments are separate from the net remuneration. In all instances, a tax certificate is necessary in the artist's country of residence to serve as evidence for the foreign tax credit. The local organiser is responsible for obtaining the tax certificate from their local Ministry of Finance. This tax certificate enables the touring artist to claim a tax credit in their country of residence.

2.4. Insurance

2.4.1. Insurance for companies

It is essential to ask the right questions when negotiating an insurance contract for a circus tent. Here are some important questions to consider.

Question to ask the interlocutor in the host country:

- What types of insurance are required? For example, liability insurance, work accident insurance, property damage insurance, etc.
- What minimum coverage limits are required?
- Are there any specificities or particular requirements linked to the circus sector or the activities of artists under big tops?
- What are the procedures to follow in the event of a disaster or accident?

Question to ask the insurance company:

- Does your current insurance policy cover the specific needs of the host country? It is important to check whether your insurance policy provides sufficient cover and meets the legal requirements of the country where you are performing.
- Does your policy cover all necessary aspects, such as equipment, facilities, personnel, work accidents, etc.? Make sure all aspects of your business are adequately covered.
- Does your insurance policy also cover activities outside your country of residence? If you plan to perform in multiple countries, make sure your insurance covers you in those specific countries.
- Don't forget to notify your insurance company if you plan to perform abroad. Let them know which countries you are visiting and the length of your stay, so they can check and adjust your insurance coverage if necessary.

Collaborating closely with your insurance company and consulting specialised insurance professionals is strongly recommended for tailored advice that suits your unique situation and requirements.

TOP TIP: HOW TO NEGOTIATE WITH AN INSURANCE COMPANY

As is often the case with extraordinary activities, artists and companies may be confronted with insurance companies who do not fully understand the project and who offer quotes that are too high. However, it is sometimes possible to

negotiate with insurance companies. Here are some tips to follow:

- **Look for competing offers**
Before you begin negotiating, take the time to research other insurance companies offering similar services. This will allow you to have a basis of comparison to argue for more reasonable prices.

- **Prepare with data**
Compile all pertinent information about your policyholder profile, your background, project specifics, and any other factors that might impact insurance costs. This data will enable you to substantiate your requests during the negotiation process.

- **Highlight your loyalty**
If you are already a long-time customer of the company, emphasise your loyalty and payment history. This can give them additional motivation to review their offer.

- **Highlight your qualities as a project manager**
If you have a good record with no accident history, highlight this, as it shows that you are a low-risk customer for the company.

- **Discuss the features of your contract**
Ask the insurance company to explain in detail what causes the rates to increase. Perhaps there are options or coverages you can adjust or remove to get a more affordable rate.

- **Negotiate discounts and special offers**
Ask if they can give you any discounts, such as a discount for paying annually rather than monthly or a discount for having multiple policies with them (if you have other insurance with the same company).

- **Consult an insurance broker**
A broker can help you find the best deals on the market by comparing offers from different companies. They can also advise you which options best suit your needs and budget.

- **Stay open to negotiation**
If the company is not willing to significantly reduce rates, be open to compromises or adjustments that could save you money while maintaining adequate coverage.

- **Consider changing company**
If, despite your efforts, the company is unwilling to offer reasonable rates, seriously consider changing insurers to get a better deal elsewhere.

Remember that negotiating can take time and patience, but being well-prepared and respectful will increase your chances of getting more affordable insurance rates.

2.4.2. Insurance for company members using their own vehicles and/or caravans

When employees use their personal vehicles for work purposes, it is crucial to address insurance considerations. Often, specific coverage is required to protect both the employee and the employer in case of accidents or damages that occur during business-related travels.

Here are some important points to consider regarding insurance when it comes to insurance for employees using their personal vehicles:

- **Check their personal car insurance coverage**

Before allowing employees to use their personal vehicles for work, it is essential to ensure that their personal auto insurance includes coverage for business use. Some personal insurance contracts may exclude coverage for business travel, so checking the terms of their insurance policy is recommended.

- **Take out additional insurance**

In addition to personal automobile insurance, you may need to consider obtaining additional coverage for business trips. This additional insurance, often referred to as "mission insurance" or "professional automobile insurance", can be obtained from specialised insurance companies. It offers extra protection in cases of accidents or damage that may occur during business travels.

- **Inform your employees about your requirements**

Employees should be well-informed about the requirements for using their personal vehicles for work, especially regarding insurance. They need to understand the significance of having sufficient coverage and promptly notify their insurance provider of any changes or incidents.

- **Establish clear policies and procedures**

It is recommended to have internal policies and procedures in place to govern the use of personal vehicles for work. This may include requirements for insurance coverage, vehicle maintenance, compliance with traffic laws and company policy. Ensure these guidelines are clear and communicated to all relevant employees.

- **Consult an insurance advisor**

Considering the complexity of insurance and regional variations, it is advisable to seek guidance from an insurance advisor or broker. They can offer tailored advice according to your business requirements and the prevailing regulations in your country.

2.4.3. Insurance for venues

When a festival invites a company with its own tent, there are several elements to consider in terms of insurance. Here are some important points.

- **Public liability**

The festival must ensure that the company has adequate liability insurance. This will cover material damage or bodily injury caused to third parties during the event. The company must have sufficient coverage to deal with possible claims.

- **Property Insurance**

The tent and equipment belonging to the company must be insured against possible damage or loss. It is recommended to check if the company has insurance covering these items and if they can provide proof of insurance.

- **Work accident insurance**

If the company employs staff to set up, manage or take down the tent, it is essential that they have appropriate workers' compensation insurance in place. This will cover any injuries or accidents that may occur while they are working.

- **Cancellation insurance**

It may be a good idea to consider whether the company has a cancellation or interruption insurance that protects

it in case of unforeseen events, such as a last-minute cancellation due to an unforeseen situation, a natural disaster, or another circumstance beyond its control.

- **Checking insurance policies**

Before agreeing with the company, request a copy of its insurance policies and have them verified by an insurance professional to ensure that they are adequate and valid.

- **Insurance contracts and clauses**

When negotiating contracts with the company, including specific clauses regarding insurance obligations is important. These clauses should clearly stipulate the required coverage amounts, beneficiary information, policy validity periods, and responsibilities in the event of a claim.

It is recommended that you consult an insurance professional or event attorney for advice specific to your situation and to ensure all necessary insurance precautions are taken.

2.5. The different types of contract

2.5.1. The contracts

There are two types of contracts: the sale contract and the co-production contract.

A contract should encompass fundamental aspects of a performance, including financial terms, intellectual property rights, the roles and obligations of the parties involved, technical details, and provisions for termination and dispute resolution. Each contract should be tailored to suit the specific requirements of the project at hand. By collaborating closely with the parties involved and seeking appropriate legal counsel, it is possible to create robust and equitable contracts that benefit all parties.

We provide a list of essential elements to incorporate into a contract. While you have the flexibility to organise and customise sections according to your preferences, we strongly recommend ensuring that all the following elements are addressed in the contracts you create with the circus company or cultural organisation, regardless of the language used for drafting the contract.

The contract for the sale of the right to present a show is an agreement between a producer and a show organiser. In this contract, the producer commits to delivering a specific number of performances to the organiser in exchange for a predetermined fee.

1. The identity of the parties and administrative information
2. Purpose of this contract
3. Obligations of the organiser
   a. Provision of a place in working order and the necessary personnel within the agreed timetable
   b. Payments for copyright and related rights
   c. Payment of entertainment tax
   d. Responsibility of an employer towards its staff
4. Obligations of the producer
   a. Has the rights to perform the show
   b. Responsibility of an employer towards its staff
   c. Certificate relating to the number of performances
5. Determine the fee and the applicable VAT rate
6. Responsibilities and insurance
7. Marketing, recording
8. Payment terms
9. Conditions for termination or suspension of the contract
   a. De facto from one or the other party
   b. Force majeure
10. Jurisdiction in case of dispute
11. Other special provisions

Date and signature of both parties with the mention:
Done in duplicate on... on / /
Precede the signature with the words "read and approved".
Both parties must initial each page of this contract.

The co-production contract is essentially a sales contract, similar to the contract for the transfer of the right to perform a show. Within the co-production framework, the organiser collaborates on a show with the producer, and the producer is not obligated to receive a transfer fee. Venues may opt for this type of contract to share the financial risks associated with running a show and avoid shouldering these risks on their own.

1. The identity of the parties and administrative information
2. Purpose of this contract
3. Obligations of the organiser
   a. Provision of a place in working order and the necessary personnel within the agreed timetable
   b. Payments for copyright and related rights
   c. Payment of entertainment tax
   d. Responsibility of an employer towards its staff
4. Obligations of the producer
   a. Has the rights to perform the show
   b. Responsibility of an employer towards its staff
   c. Certificate relating to the number of performances
5. Joint obligations
6. Financial agreement
   a. Number of seats available and ticket prices
   b. Sharing of box office income (*if applicable*)
      i. Method
      ii. Distribution date
      iii. Box office reports
   c. Guaranteed minimum (*if applicable*)
   d. Tax regime applied to the contract and ticketing
   e. Repayment of VAT
7. Agreed Assembly/disassembly/rehearsal schedule
8. Liability and insurance
9. Marketing, recording
10. Payment terms
11. Conditions for termination or suspension of the contract
    a. De facto from one or the other party
    b. Force majeure
12. Jurisdiction in case of dispute
13. Other special provisions

Date and signature of both parties with the mention:
Done in duplicate on... on / /
Precede the signature with the words "read and approved".
Both parties must initial each page of this contract.

Cancellation clause

Give careful consideration to the cancellation clause within the contract. Ensure a clear understanding of the cancellation policy and verify if it aligns with your expectations. Clarify any compensation or refund terms in the event of cancellation and ensure these conditions are equitable for both parties.

2.5.2. Appendices

In the context of sales contracts, certain elements are not directly covered by the sales contract, which primarily pertains to the show itself. However, these elements are related to the show and must be included in the contract as separate annexes. Each additional subject should be detailed in a new annexe to the contract.

Appendices to the contract

1. The identity of the parties and administrative information
2. Purpose of this contract

Possible topics for appendices:
- Technical rider
- Green rider (cf. section III, article 1.2.3. of the guide)
- Additional costs (meals, accommodation, transport)
- Possible wrap-around activities
- Any other elements that you consider important to specify in the contract

Date and signature of both parties with the mention:
Done in duplicate on... on / /
Precede the signature with the words "read and approved".
Both parties must initial each page of this contract.

NB : costs listed in the appendices are subject to the same VAT rate as the show fee.

Additional costs
Ensure that all expenses associated with hosting the show in a tent are explicitly detailed in a quote. This should encompass mileage fees for all vehicles, accommodation costs, and daily per diems (or meal allowances) for all staff members during the duration of travel related to the performance covered by this contract. Additionally, clearly define the payment terms applicable to this contract based on the mutual agreement of both parties (either in the organiser's or producer's country).

TOP TIP: RULES FOR APPLYING PER DIEM

Each European Union member country has the flexibility to define its own regulations concerning meal allowances for posted workers. Typically, the rates applied are determined by the organiser. Nevertheless, if the standard per diem rates in your country are more favourable, this can be a topic for negotiation before finalising the agreement.

Per diems can constitute a negotiable component within the overall fee, as their value can be mutually agreed upon by both parties independently of any established guidelines. To prevent financial misunderstandings, specifying individual and cumulative amounts in the contract appendix is essential.

Technical rider
Include a comprehensive technical rider in the contract, tailored to the specific site where the performance will take place. This guarantees mutual agreement on the show's technical requirements (timetable, staffing needs, layouts, etc.) and the tent itself. The technical rider should encompass all technical facets, including structural dimensions, spatial and material prerequisites, lighting, sound, and more.

By incorporating these components into the contract, you will establish a robust framework for project execution. It is imperative to comprehend all clauses and, if needed, seek legal advice to ensure that the contract aligns with your particular requirements and safeguards the interests of both parties involved.

2.6. Hiring local workers

2.6.1. Temporary employment agency or direct contracts with local workers

In some instances, especially in the context of co-production or self-production, you may need to employ local personnel to perform specific tasks (technical, audience welcoming, maintenance, etc.).

When considering hiring local staff for your tent, you have several options to explore. Here are two common solutions.

- **Temporary employment agency**
You can use a temporary employment agency in the country where you are setting up your tent. By negotiating with this agency, you will be able to discuss the financial and administrative aspects related to the employment of temporary staff. Be sure to learn about country-specific rules regarding temporary employment and workers' rights to create a suitable working environment for your temporary colleagues. In this case, the temporary employment agency will manage the fiscal and administrative aspects of temporary employees.

- **Direct contracts with local workers**
You can also hire local workers directly using your usual contracts. In this case, it is important to check with the local administration to understand the country's specific rules regarding temporary employment and workers' rights. Ensure you comply with the country's laws and regulations regarding employment, remuneration, social protection, and workplace safety. In this case, the temporary worker will pay his taxes and social security contributions in his country of residence.

TOP TIP: THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF CONTRACTS VIA TEMPORARY WORK AGENCIES AND DIRECT CONTRACTS WITH LOCAL WORKERS

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Temporary employment agency	**Ease and speed of recruitment** Temporary employment agencies already have a pool of pre-screened potential candidates, which can speed up the recruitment process. **Expertise in administrative management** The agency typically handles paperwork, payroll processing, and benefits. This relieves the company of employment-related administrative tasks. **Flexibility** Temporary recruitment allows the company to cope with fluctuations in labour demand without a long-term commitment. **Management of legal obligations** In some countries, direct recruitment may involve complex legal obligations for the foreign company. The temporary employment agency can take care of these aspects.	**Higher costs** Temporary employment agencies charge fees for their services, which can increase labour costs. **Less control over employee selection** The company may have less influence over the agency's candidate selection process, which could result in employees less suited to its specific needs. **Lack of continuity** Temporary hiring can lead to more frequent staff turnover, which can negatively impact team stability and coherence.
Direct contracts with local workers	**Full control over the recruitment process** The company can choose candidates who best match its specific needs and corporate culture. **Reduced potential costs** Avoiding agency fees can be beneficial in the long run, reducing employment costs. **Team stability** Direct recruiting can lead to more engaged and motivated employees, which can promote stability and team cohesion.	**Administrative and legal complexities** Recruiting directly from abroad can result in complex administrative, tax and legal constraints, particularly if the company has yet to gain prior experience in that country. **Linguistic and cultural barriers** Managing foreign employees can be more complex due to cultural and linguistic differences. **Visa and work authorisation requirements** Recruiting foreign workers may require additional steps to obtain the appropriate visas and work authorisations.

2.6.2. How to pay local workers

When a company hires employees from different countries within the European Union, it must take into account the tax and social disparities between these countries. For example, if the company hires a technician in Romania and a technician in Sweden with identical gross salaries, taxes and social charges will generally be higher in Sweden, resulting in a lower take-home salary for the Swedish technician compared to his Romanian counterpart. Thus, a salary considered attractive in one country may seem less competitive in another, given differences in costs of living and tax systems within the EU.

To ensure fair working conditions for its employees in different countries of the European Union, the employer can adjust salaries accordingly. For example, the company may offer regional salary adjustments to account for variations in living costs and taxes in each country. Additionally, it may consider providing specific benefits and bonuses to compensate for financial differences between countries. Finally, the company can also decide to offer an identical salary to everyone, in agreement with the various stakeholders (artists, technicians, production managers, distribution, communication, etc.). By considering these tax and social disparities within the EU, the employer can ensure a fair and competitive working environment for all employees, regardless of their geographic location.

It is recommended to seek advice from labour law professionals or human resources experts to ensure compliance with the rules and regulations applicable in the host country. This way, it will create a legal and fair working environment for your temporary employees and ensure compliance with tax and administrative obligations.

2.6.3. Temporary secondment of workers

There are European regulations regarding the posting of workers, which apply when employers send their employees to work temporarily in another country in the European Union. This regulation aims to guarantee the protection of the rights of posted workers while ensuring fair competition between companies.

European Directive 96/71/EC, adopted in 1996, establishes the basic rules for the posting of workers. According to this directive, employers must respect certain conditions when posting workers to another EU member state.

The main provisions of this directive include:

- Minimum remuneration: posted workers must receive a minimum salary in accordance with the legislation of the host country. This requirement is in place to prevent social dumping, which involves posting workers while paying them wages lower than those typically offered in the host country.
- Maximum working hours: posted workers must respect the provisions regarding working hours and weekly rest provided for by the host country's legislation.
- Working conditions: posted workers must benefit from the same working conditions as those applicable to local workers concerning paid leave, health and safety at work, etc.
- Social protection: posted workers must be affiliated with social security in the country of origin, but can also benefit from certain social benefits in the host country, such as access to health care.

It should be noted that the implementation and enforcement of this regulation is the responsibility of EU Member States. Each country may have its own additional laws and rules to ensure that the rights of posted workers are respected. Therefore, it is important to consult the national legislation of the country concerned for specific information.

2.7. Working with animals

While animals are uncommon in contemporary circus, some artists and companies may choose to incorporate them into their performances. It is crucial to familiarise yourself with the regulations in each country before including animals in your shows.

Regulations pertaining to the use of animals in circus performances vary from one European country to another. However, there are European-level directives and regulations aimed at promoting animal welfare and regulating the use of animals in such events.

In 2009, the European Union issued a recommendation urging member states to implement measures that enhance animal welfare in circuses. These measures include setting appropriate standards for animal housing and care, as well as providing training for individuals working with animals.

Many countries have already enacted bans or strict restrictions on the use of wild animals in circus performances. Some countries have gone even further by prohibiting the use of all animals, including wild species like tigers, lions, giraffes, and elephants, as well as domestic animals, such as horses and dogs.

TOP TIP: LAWS AND RESTRICTIONS IN EACH EU MEMBER STATE AND THE UK[1]

Country	National ban on the use of all animals	National ban on the use of wild animals	Regional ban on the use of wild animals	Legally binding restrictions on the use of wild animals	No restrictions on the use of wild animals
Austria		✓			
Belgium		✓			
Bulgaria		✓			
Croatia		✓			
Cyprus	✓				
Czechia				✓	
Denmark		✓			
Estonia		✓			
Finland				✓	
France					✓
Germany					✓
Greece	✓				
Hungary				✓	
Ireland		✓			

1 Wild animals in European circuses. Problem, risks and solutions" by Eurogroup For Animal: https://www.eurogroupforanimals.org/files/eurogroupforanimals/2022-03/E4A-Circus_Report-2021-FRA-screen.pdf

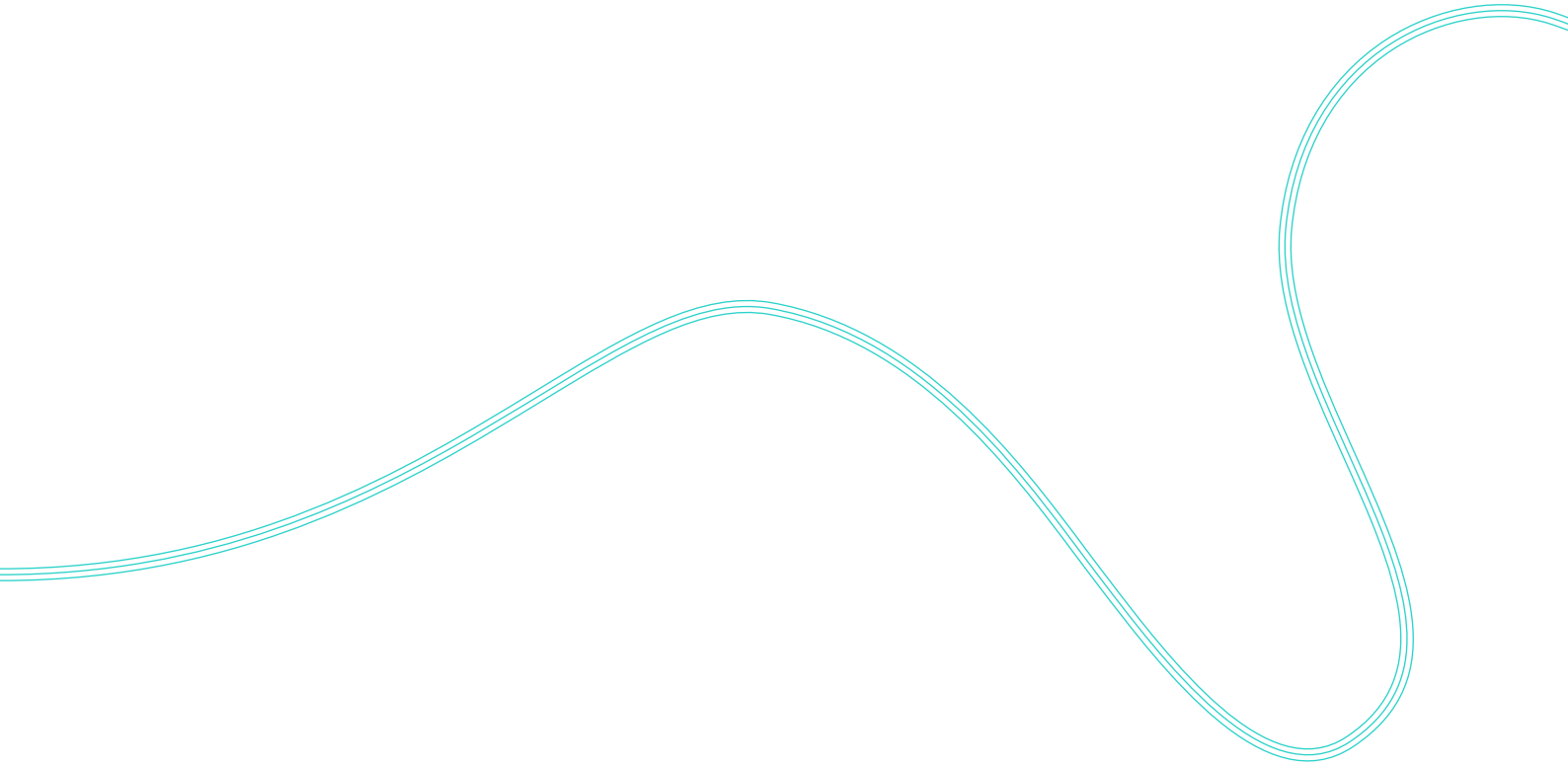
Country	National ban on the use of all animals	National ban on the use of wild animals	Regional ban on the use of wild animals	Legally binding restrictions on the use of wild animals	No restrictions on the use of wild animals
Italy					✓
Latvia		✓			
Lithuania		✓			
Luxembourg		✓			
Malta	✓				
Netherlands		✓			
Poland				✓	
Portugal		✓			
Romania		✓			
Slovakia		✓			
Slovenia		✓			
Spain			✓		
Sweden		✓			
United Kingdom			✓		

DEFINITION OF A WILD ANIMAL

The term "wild animal" comprises those species whose populations still exist in their natural habitat, in the country of origin. That is to say, a species whose collective behaviour, life cycle or physiology remains unaltered from their wild counterparts, even when they have been bred and lived under human control for multiple generations.

A special case is the Camelidae family, and in particular Bactrian camels (Camelus bactrianus), dromedaries (Camelus dromedarius), and llamas (Lama glama), which are often used in circuses. These species are generally considered domestic, yet many experts have raised concerns over their domestication definition. Several studies argue that there is insufficient evidence to support camel domestication, even though there are a few genetic differences. Others argue that there is evidence of hybridisation between domestic forms and wild ancestors. For example, between the llama (Lama glama) and the guanaco (Lama guanicoe). Morphologically and physiologically "domestic" individuals are equal to their wild ancestors. Therefore, it can be assumed that their behavioural needs are the same, particularly regarding their nomadic lifestyle to which they are still adapted. For all of the above-mentioned reasons, we consider that species belonging to the Camelidae family should be included in the category "wild animal". However, in many national bans on the use of wild animals in circuses, Camelidae are not considered wild [1]

These regulations are relatively recent and subject to ongoing changes and updates. It is advisable to consult the specific national legislations of each country to obtain precise and up-to-date information on the regulations in effect. Typically, the respective countries' Ministries of Agriculture, Environment, or Culture are the responsible authorities for regulating these matters and can offer comprehensive information on the subject.



1 Definition from the report Wild Animals in EU Circuses by Eurogroup For Animal: https://www.eurogroupforanimals.org/files/eurogroupforanimals/2021-08/E4A-Circus_Report-09-08-2021.pdf

3 FINANCES



The financial aspect of a big top tour is a crucial consideration for both companies and artists looking to showcase their shows and venues interested in hosting them.

When planning a big top tour, there are two primary factors to consider: determining an appropriate fee structure and identifying partners who can assist in covering the tour's expenses.

In this chapter, we will delve into strategies for establishing a fair fee structure that considers production costs, financial objectives, and the realities of the market. Additionally, we will explore the various sources of financial assistance and grants available to support the touring of big tops, with a particular focus on government agencies, foundations, and funding programs. A thorough understanding of these fundamental financing aspects will enable artists and companies to effectively plan and execute successful and sustainable big top tours.

3.1. Calculating your fee

When calculating the cost of your show (production cost) or its hosting, whether it's through a sale or self-production, it's crucial to consider both expenses (costs) and revenues (income) to ensure its financial success. An accurate assessment of costs and income sources ensures efficient financial management and economic viability while minimising risks and maximising the chances of success.

Expenditure

- Fees for assembly days*
- Fees for performance days*
- Fees for dismantling days*
- Fees for employees responsible for transporting show materials*
- Fees for technical preparation (working time before implementation)*
- Fees for office staff (tour booking, logistics, accounting, administration, budgeting, etc.)*
- Fee for a translator (if needed)*
- Fee for a wardrobe person (if needed)*
- Technical management costs
- Show consumables
- Contingency for unforeseen costs (generally between 5 and 10% of the production costs listed above)

* These fees should align with the prevailing social minimums in your country and conform to the collective agreements specific to your company's country of operation.

Additional costs

- Travel for staff and equipment
- Accommodation

- Meal
- Additional bathroom hires
- ATA carnet and various customs fees
- Working time on the ATA carnet
- Insurance
- Marketing
- Visa or permit fees
- Hire (or purchase) of a construction telehandler for unloading heavy equipment
- Equipment for costume maintenance (e.g. washing machine)

Additional fee recommended

- Hire or purchase a vehicle for the on-site team and gas costs

3.2. Additional costs

When planning a tent tour or considering hosting a tent, it's crucial to account for incidental expenses that may arise in addition to the base selling price. These costs can vary based on several factors including the tour's duration, the countries visited, and the team's specific requirements.

Incidental costs encompass various expenditures such as transportation costs for relocating the team and equipment between locations, accommodation expenses for lodging the team during the tour, food costs to cover daily meals, administrative expenses associated with legal and administrative procedures, communication and promotional costs for marketing the shows, logistical expenses for equipment and venue management, as well as unforeseen costs that may emerge during the course of the tour.

Here are some examples of additional costs to take into consideration when putting together your budget.

- **Transports**
These are the costs associated with moving the team, equipment and tent from one location to another. This may include fuel, toll, vehicle hire, or freight.

- **Accommodation**
These costs may vary depending on the team, the length of stay, the number of people and the level of comfort desired. Accommodation in caravans impacts transport costs.

- **Food**
It is important to budget for the team's food and meals throughout the tour from the time the team leaves their home until they return. This may include meals taken in restaurants, food shopping, catering costs at the venue, etc.

- **Administration**
Organising a tour often involves administrative costs such as visas, work permits, insurance, customs fees, and

local taxes. Learning about the specific requirements of each country visited, and including these costs in your overall budget is essential.

- **Marketing**

To enhance the tour's visibility and engagement with the public, there may be associated communication and promotion expenses. This may include creating and distributing promotional materials, advertising online or in local media, and costs related to telephone or Internet communication.

- **Logistics**

In addition to transportation costs, there may be costs related to tour logistics, such as storing equipment between performances, rental of rehearsal or set-up space.

It's essential to proactively consider these additional costs when strategising for the tour to create a practical budget and secure the required financial resources. Diligent expense management guarantees the tour's success and prevents unexpected financial challenges.

3.3. Support available for touring companies

When artists, circus teams, festivals, or cultural organisations plan to embark on a big top tour or host such an event, one of the critical questions often revolves around financing. Touring expenses, including transportation, accommodations, production costs, and salaries, can be substantial. Fortunately, various grant and financial aid opportunities are available to support these artistic endeavours. These grants, provided by national, European, or international organisations, encourage artistic mobility, foster cultural exchanges, and promote artistic diversity across Europe. Below, we'll introduce some financial aid options you may be eligible for.

Please bear in mind that we cannot present an exhaustive list of all available assistance programs. We recommend contacting the relevant authorities in your country of residence for the most accurate guidance.

In general, it's advisable for artistic teams to contact their Ministry of Culture, regional support agencies, artistic associations, resource centres, or federations to inquire about available grant programs and eligibility criteria.

For organisations looking to host shows under a big top, we recommend contacting their Ministry of Culture, regional agencies, and support funds. Exploring partnerships with municipalities and local tourist offices can also be beneficial, as they may be interested in hosting big top shows to enhance their regions' cultural and tourist activities. Such entities might provide financial aid, venue infrastructure, or logistical support to facilitate event organisation.

Additionally, it's worthwhile to explore European funding programs like the Creative Europe program, which supports artistic and cultural projects throughout Europe, including those related to contemporary circus and outdoor arts. The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) or the Operational Program FSE+ can also be mobilised to support cultural and artistic projects, including big top events.

Corporate sponsorship is another avenue for financing cultural events. Identifying potential partners and establishing partnerships with local or national companies can lead to financial support.

Below, you'll find a non-exhaustive list of funding opportunities by European Union countries that we have access to as of the time of writing. Remember that funding opportunities may change from year to year, so it's crucial to stay informed about project calls, application deadlines, and eligibility criteria.

- **Austria**

In Austria, in addition to the Federal Ministry of Art and Culture (BMKÖS), there is specific support for touring big tops and circuses. One of the main sources of funding is the Landes Kultur Förderung.

Each region in Austria has its own cultural support programs which provide grants to artists and circus companies for show creation, touring and other big top-related projects.

Austria has specific cultural funds that provide subsidies and grants to artists and cultural organisations. For example, the Austrian National Culture Fund (Bundeskanzleramt Kunst und Kultur) financially supports various artistic projects.

- **Belgium**

In Belgium, there are travel grants and financial support, including for big top circuses. The Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles is the key stakeholder for arts and culture grants in Brussels and Wallonia. The Vlaams Fonds voor de Letteren in Flanders can offer grants to travelling artists and circus companies as well as support for structural costs. These grants can be used to support tour-related costs, such as transport, accommodation, logistics, and production costs.

For Flemish artists, we invite you to contact Circuscentrum who will be able to direct you to the various aids available to you.

- **Bulgaria**

In Bulgaria, there are funding opportunities for artistic projects, including those related to big tops and circuses. One source of funding is the National Culture Program, which provides grants to artists and circus companies to create shows, tours and other cultural projects. Additionally, the Ministry of Culture of Bulgaria offers regular calls for projects to support artistic and cultural initiatives. The Bulgarian Ministry of Culture offers funding programs for arts and culture, such as the National Program "Culture" and the National Program "Young Talents". These programs can support circus projects, including transportation, accommodation and logistics costs.

- **Cyprus**

In Cyprus, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth offers grant programs to support cultural and artistic activities. However, there is no grant specifically dedicated to big tops in Cyprus.

Cyprus has cultural support funds which can support artistic and cultural projects, including big top circus performances. These funds provide grants to artists and cultural organisations for their projects. Inquiring about cultural support funds available in Cyprus for funding opportunities is recommended.

Circus companies and structures interested in touring here are recommended to contact the Ministry of Culture of Cyprus, local cultural institutions, and cultural foundations or organisations to find out about available funding opportunities.

- **Croatia**

The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia offers grant programs that aim to promote arts and culture, including touring projects. Artists and structures can also obtain information from the Croatian Foundation for Arts and Culture, which supports artistic initiatives and encourages cultural diversity. However, there is no grant specifically dedicated to big top touring in Croatia. It is recommended to inquire with the Ministry of Culture, local cultural institutions and cultural foundations or organisations to find out about available funding opportunities.

- **Czechia**

The Ministry of Culture of Czechia (Ministerstvo Kultury České Republiky) offers various funding and grant programs for cultural and artistic projects. They may have specific initiatives related to touring big top.

Charitable funds and foundations (Nadační fondy a nadace): There are several charitable funds and foundations in Czechia that support cultural and artistic projects. Some may offer specific grants and assistance for travelling projects, including those related to big tops.

Czech regions and municipalities (České kraje a obce): Some regions and municipalities in Czechia offer specific grants and assistance for local cultural and artistic projects, including touring big top.

- **Denmark**

In Denmark, there are different funding opportunities for artistic and cultural projects, including those related to touring big tops. One option is to turn to the Danish Arts Foundation, which is one of the main institutions that provides grants to artists and cultural organisations and offers several funding programs for artists and cultural projects.

The Statens Kunstfond (National Arts Fund) is the state body responsible for supporting arts and culture in Denmark. It offers different funding programs for artistic projects, including circus shows and big tops.

Kulturpuljen is also a cultural support fund which aims to promote cultural and artistic diversity in Denmark. This fund provides grants for innovative artistic projects, which may include hosting shows under a big top.

Exploring other cultural funding foundations and programs in Denmark, such as private foundations, regional foundations and programs specific to the performing arts is also recommended. For example, the Cirkus Fonden Foundation offers grants to circus projects, including those involving big tops. The Augustinus Fonden Foundation and the A.P. Møller Fonden Foundation are other examples of foundations that support artistic and cultural initiatives in Denmark.

- **Estonia**

In Estonia, there are funding opportunities for artistic and cultural projects. The main funding agencies in Estonia are the Ministry of Culture and the Estonian Cultural Fund, both offer various subsidies and grants for artists and cultural organisations. In particular, they support artistic projects and cultural events, which may include hosting shows under a big top. However, there is no grant specifically dedicated to touring big tops.

Cultural organisations and foundations in Estonia, such as the Performing Arts and Music Center (ETC), the Estonian Cultural Foundation or the Foundation Cultural Capital, also offer funding programs for artistic and cultural projects in the country.

- **Finland**

The primary sources of funding in Finland are the Ministry of Education and Culture, as well as various cultural and arts funds. However, there is no grant specifically dedicated to touring and hosting big tops
You can turn to the Arts Promotion Center Finland, the Finnish Arts Fund, the Culture Promotion Fund, and the Regional Arts Fund, which support artistic and cultural projects in the country. They offer different funding programs for artists and cultural organisations, such as project grants, artistic residencies, festivals, etc.

The National Center for Performing Arts (NTC), under the Ministry of Education and Culture, supports the performing arts sector in Finland. They run several funding programs for artists and cultural organisations, which could include grants for big top shows.

The Kone Foundation also supports artistic projects.

For more information, you can get in touch with Circus and Dance Info Finland: https://circusdance.fi/en/

- **France**

In France, there are several grants and financial support dedicated to touring big top and circus projects. Here are some examples:

Ministry of Culture (DGCA - Direction Générale de la Création Artistique): They subsidise the creation and touring of tented shows.

Regional Directorate of Cultural Affairs (DRAC - Direction Régionale des Affaires Culturelles): each region in France has a DRAC which can grant subsidies, including for big tops.

Regions and Départements: local authorities can offer subsidies for artistic and cultural projects as well as support to buy equipment.

The National Fund for Sustainable Employment in Entertainment (FONPEPS - Fonds national pour l'emploi pérenne dans le spectacle) can offer grants for touring.

The National Office for Touring (ONDA - Office National de Diffusion Artistique) supports touring on French territories. ONDA, Territoires de Cirque and ARTCENA have joined forces to better support circus projects under big tops and started a new programme in 2022: venues will receive support to programme two selected companies for two years.

ONDA also promotes cooperation between venues and supports sustainable tour booking (minimum three venues in a 300 km radius booking the same show). This financial support venues programming large-scale shows, including big tops.

For venues programming big tops, the National Fund for Territorial Planning and Development (FNADT - Fonds National pour l'Aménagement et le Développement du Territoire) supports territorial planning projects, including cultural projects. They can help with financing temporary art installations, including big tops.

For more information on subsidies in France, get in touch with ARTCENA.

- **Germany**

Germany provides specific support for big tops and circus as a whole, notably through initiatives like the National Fund for the Development of Circus Art, known as the "Nationaler Pakt für Zirkuskünste." This program offers financial backing to circus projects, which includes those related to big tops. It extends grants to circus companies and artists, encompassing funding for tours, show creation, and the procurement of technical equipment.

It is also possible to turn to other artistic and cultural funding programs in Germany, such as the National Fund for Culture (Kulturförderung des Bundes) and regional or local foundations, such as the Kulturstiftung des Freistaates Sachsen.

- **Greece**

The Ministry of Culture and Sport in Greece offers subsidy and aid programs tailored to artistic and cultural initiatives. These programs aim to bolster the creation, production, dissemination, and preservation of cultural heritage, with the possibility of specific support for big top shows and the hosting of such events. However, it's important to note that there are no dedicated subsidies for big tops.

Greece hosts numerous cultural and artistic funds that extend financial assistance to artists and cultural organisations. These encompass institutions such as the Greek Cultural Fund and the National Cultural Foundation, in addition to private foundations and cultural associations. Exploring opportunities within these avenues is advisable. Additionally, reaching out to arts associations and networks in Greece can yield valuable guidance and advice regarding funding possibilities related to big top and circus projects.

- **Hungary**

In Hungary, various forms of financial support are available for artistic and cultural projects, extending to the travelling circus. However, it's essential to note that no specific subsidy is exclusively allocated to the mobility of big tops. Financial resources in Hungary primarily originate from the Ministry of Innovation and Technology, along with several cultural and artistic funds, such as the Hungarian National Fund for Culture.
Regarding entities interested in hosting performances under a big top, no distinct grant is available for this purpose. Nevertheless, cultural institutions and municipalities are potential sources of support and subsidies for cultural and artistic events in general, which may encompass hosting shows under a big top.

- **Ireland**

The Arts Council Ireland is the government funding body in Ireland. They administer various grant and funding programs tailored for artists and cultural institutions, including big tops.

Local Authorities: Local authorities across Ireland might also extend grants and financial assistance for regional arts and cultural initiatives, including big top tours. It's worth noting that each local authority can establish its unique criteria and funding schemes, so reaching out directly to the relevant local town hall is advised for more detailed information.

Private foundations and organisations: Researching foundations, associations, or private entities in Ireland that endorse arts and culture could be beneficial. Some of these organisations may offer subsidies and grants intended for specific projects, including big tops. Examples: The Ireland Funds and The Royal Irish Academy.

- **Italy**

Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities (Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali): the Italian ministry in charge of culture offers different funding and grant programs for artistic and cultural projects.
Region (Regione): Each region in Italy has its own funds and grant programs for cultural and artistic projects. Regional authorities may offer specific support for big top.

Foundations (Fondazioni): there are many private foundations in Italy that support arts and culture, including bank foundations. Some of them may offer subsidies and grants for travelling art projects.

- **Latvia**

The Latvian Cultural Capital Fund (Latvijas Kultūras kapitāla fund) is one of the main public institutions supporting cultural and artistic projects in Latvia.

Ministry of Culture: The Ministry of Culture of Latvia also offers funding and grant programs for cultural and artistic projects. They may have specific initiatives for big tops.

Foundations and organisations: like in other countries, it can be helpful to research private foundations and organisations in Latvia that support arts and culture. Some of them may offer subsidies and grants for travelling art projects. Example: Soros Foundation-Latvia.

- **Lithuania**

Lithuanian Cultural Council (Lietuvos Kultūros Taryba): As the government body overseeing the support and promotion of cultural and artistic programmes, the Lithuanian Cultural Council administers a variety of grant and funding programs intended for artistic projects, including big tops.

Ministry of Culture: The Ministry of Culture in Lithuania is another source of funding and grant programs aimed at cultural and artistic projects, including big tops.

Private foundations and organisations: Much like in other countries, researching private foundations and organisations in Lithuania that champion the arts and culture can be beneficial. Some of these entities may provide grants for big tops.

- **Luxembourg**

The Luxembourg Ministry of Culture offers various funding and grant programs for cultural and artistic projects, including bog tops. You can visit their website or contact them directly to learn more about financing opportunities.

The Luxembourg National Cultural Fund (Focuna) is dedicated to supporting artistic and cultural projects in the country. They offer grants across different areas, including big tops. You can visit their website for information on current programs and funding opportunities.

- **Malta**

The Arts Council Malta is the national body responsible for promoting and supporting arts and culture in Malta. They offer different grant and funding programs for artistic projects, including those related to travelling performing arts.

It may be helpful to research private foundations and organisations in Malta that support arts and culture. Some of them may offer subsidies and grants for travelling art projects.

Local authorities in Malta may also offer specific grants and assistance for local cultural and artistic projects, including big tops.

- **Poland**

Instytut Teatralny is a Polish cultural institute that supports the development and promotion of theatre in Poland. They offer grants and support programs for artistic projects, including big tops.

The National Center of Culture (Narodowe Centrum Kultury) is a government organisation that supports cultural projects in Poland. They offer grants and funding programs for arts projects, including big tops.

It may be helpful to research private foundations and organisations in Poland that support arts and culture. Some of them may offer subsidies and grants for big tops.

- **Portugal**

The General Directorate of Arts (Direção-Geral das Artes) is the Portuguese government agency responsible for supporting and promoting arts and culture. They offer different grant and funding programs for arts projects, including big tops.

The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation is a Portuguese foundation that supports arts, culture and education. They offer subsidies and grants for artistic projects, including big tops.

- **Romania**

L'Administration of the Cultural Fundnational (AFCN - Administrația Fondului Cultural Național) is the Romanian government agency responsible for supporting cultural and artistic projects. They offer different grant and funding programs for arts projects, including big tops.

The National Dance Center in Bucharest offers grants and support programs for dance projects, including big tops.

The Romanian Cultural Foundation (Fundația Culturală Română) supports cultural and artistic projects in Romania. They offer grants for art projects, including big tops.

- **Slovakia**

The Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic (Ministerstvo kultúry Slovenskej republiky) offers various grant and funding programs for cultural and artistic projects. They may have specific initiatives for big tops.

Fond Na Podporu Umenia (Slovak Arts Council) is an institution that supports artistic and cultural projects in Slovakia, including big tops.

Researching private foundations and organisations in Slovakia that support arts and culture may be helpful. Some of them may offer subsidies and grants for big tops.

- **Slovenia**

The Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia (Ministrstvo Za Kulturo) offers various grant and funding programs for cultural and artistic projects. They may have specific initiatives related to big top roaming.

The Public Fund of the Republic of Slovenia for cultural activities (Javni klad RS Za Kulturne Dejavnosti) supports cultural and artistic projects in Slovenia. They offer grants for art projects, including big tops.

Trusts and foundations (Foundations in Zasebne Organizacije) can be helpful for private funding in Slovenia. Some of them may offer subsidies and grants for big tops.

- **Spain**

In Spain, there are various funding opportunities for artistic and cultural projects, including those related to touring big tops. The Ministry of Culture and Sport offers different lines of subsidies and aid for artistic projects. They support artistic creation, production, dissemination and promotion projects, which may include big tops.

The National Institute of Performing Arts and Music (INAEM) is the Spanish public body responsible for promoting and developing the performing arts. It offers various support programs for companies and cultural structures.

Furthermore, the Autonomous Communities in Spain also have their own subsidy and cultural support programs. For example, in Catalonia, the Institut Català de les Empreses Culturals (ICEC) offers grants to artistic and cultural projects, including big tops.

- **Sweden**

The National Council for Culture (Statens Kulturråd) is the Swedish government body responsible for supporting and developing arts and culture. They offer different grant and funding programs for arts projects, including big tops.

The Cultural Bridge (Kulturbryggan) is a Swedish agency that supports innovative and participatory cultural projects. They offer grants for artistic projects, including big tops.

Local authorities in Sweden can provide specific grants and support for arts and cultural projects. Some regions may have initiatives dedicated to big tops.

- **The Netherlands**

The Podiumkunsten Fund is the Dutch organisation supporting the performing arts, including touring projects. They offer various grants for theatre, dance, music, and other art forms.

The Mondriaan Fonds is a Dutch fund dedicated to visual arts and museums. They offer grants for artistic projects that may include big tops when connected to visual arts.

The Fund for the Promotion of Creative Industry (Stimuleringsfonds Creatieve Industrie) supports innovative projects in the fields of architecture, design, e-culture, and other creative disciplines.

Some municipalities in the Netherlands may offer specific grants and support for local cultural and artistic projects, including big top roaming.

- **United Kingdom**

Arts Council England is England's national funding body for art and culture. They offer different grants and funding programs for arts projects, including big tops.

Creative Scotland is the national funder for art and culture in Scotland. They offer grants and financial support for artistic projects, including big tops.

The Arts Council of Wales is the national funding body for art and culture in Wales. They offer grants and financial support for artistic projects, including big tops.

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland is the national funding body for art and culture in Northern Ireland. They offer grants and financial support for artistic projects, including big tops.



4 ORGANISING YOUR EUROPEAN TOUR

Organising a big top tour in Europe is a pivotal step in guaranteeing a successful and seamless performance. Beyond the essential environmental benefits, such as reducing a company's significant carbon footprint when using a big top [1], meticulous upfront planning is imperative to account for all logistical, administrative, operational, and financial considerations. This undertaking is paramount in ensuring an optimal experience for the team, artists, and audiences.

Thoroughly preparing and organising a tour not only maximises travel efficiency but also minimises logistical issues and mitigates unexpected disruptions that could interfere with performances. Moreover, proper planning empowers you to fully leverage the opportunities presented by each venue, adapting to the diverse regulations and unique requirements of each European country.

The significance of proactive tour organisation also lies in ensuring the comfort and safety of the entire team and artists throughout the journey. Anticipating needs helps prevent stressful situations and logistical challenges.

Lastly, effective tour organisation fosters strong relationships with local partners, organisers, and relevant authorities in each visited country. By adhering to administrative protocols, regulatory mandates, and safety standards, the big top team can cultivate a reputation for professionalism and adherence to regulations, ultimately enhancing the success of their shows and building audience loyalty.

In this section, we will outline the key components necessary for the thorough preparation and successful execution of your tour within the European Union.

4.1. Paperwork

When an artist or company travels in Europe, it is recommended to have the following documents.

- **Passport or identity card**
It is essential to have a valid identity document when travelling through European countries. Please note that to enter the UK, it is now necessary to have a passport with at least three months of validity.

- **Visa or work permit**
Depending on your country of residence and the length of your stay, you may need a visa or a specific work permit to carry out your artistic activity in certain countries of the European Union. Requirements vary from country to country, so it's important to check the specific rules for each country you plan to visit.

- **Employment contract or letter of engagement**
It is recommended to have an employment contract or letter of engagement from the employer or event organiser detailing the conditions and duration of your engagement as an artist.

- **The European Health Insurance Card (EHIC)**
It is an essential document for European citizens who travel or temporarily stay in another country of the European Union (EU), the European Economic Area (EEA) or in Switzerland. It guarantees access to health care and facilitates administrative procedures in the event of a medical need.

- **Public liability insurance certificate**
It is advisable to have public liability insurance covering possible damage caused to third parties during your performances or your presence at the event venue.

1 For more information on the link between big top circus and ecology, you can refer to the section dedicated to this subject in chapter 4.

- **International driving licence**

If you plan to drive a vehicle during your stay, you may need an international driving licence in addition to your national driving licence.

- **ATA Carnet (Temporary Admission)**

If you are transporting specific materials or equipment, such as sets, costumes or stage equipment, you may need an ATA Carnet to help clear customs and avoid temporary customs duties.

- **Technical specifications**

Even if national regulations do not explicitly require technical specifications for the big top, it is strongly recommended to have them at hand in order to guarantee the safety of workers and the public, as well as to meet the standards of quality and professionalism expected in the circus industry.

These requirements can vary depending on your country of residence, nationality, and the nature of your artistic activities. It's crucial to consult the websites of embassies, especially their consular services, or contact the relevant authorities in the countries where you intend to work to obtain accurate and current information on the necessary documents.

4.2. Marketing

In Europe, regulations concerning the placement of posters to promote a show can vary from one country to another and even from one region to another within the same country. If you plan to display posters in a particular area, it's essential to obtain the necessary authorisations from the local authorities of the city where you intend to advertise.

Most European countries have specific rules and regulations governing outdoor advertising displays. These rules outline permitted locations, maximum dimensions, display periods, aesthetic requirements, and more. The primary objective of these regulations is to maintain public order, preserve the visual landscape, and prevent excessive advertising clutter.

Authorisations for poster placement are typically issued by municipalities, regional administrations, or other entities responsible for managing public spaces. To ensure compliance with local regulations, companies and organisers should contact the relevant local authorities, such as municipalities, tourist offices, or billboard services, to obtain detailed information on the requirements and procedures for securing billboard permits in each jurisdiction.

Adhering to local regulations and obtaining the necessary permits is essential to avoid fines or penalties associated with illegal outdoor advertising displays.

TOP TIP: CONSEQUENCES OF UNAUTHORISED OR NON-COMPLIANT POSTER DISPLAYS

The potential penalties for unauthorised or non-compliant poster displays in European cities can vary significantly, depending on the specific regulations of each country and municipality. Here are some common examples of sanctions that may be imposed:

- **Fines**

The fine amount can differ based on the severity of the violation and the local regulations in effect.

- **Removal of posters**

Authorities may require the immediate removal of unauthorised posters. If these posters are not taken down within the stipulated time, the authorities may intervene to remove them, incurring additional costs for the responsible party.

- **Future bans**
In cases of repeated violations of display advertising regulations, authorities may impose future display bans or stricter restrictions, potentially preventing the company or individual from conducting future displays in the affected region.

- **Other administrative sanctions**
Depending on local regulations, additional administrative sanctions may be applied. These could include suspending or revoking business licence, mandatory corrective actions, additional financial penalties, and more.

It's important to note that each country and municipality may have its own specific procedures and sanctions related to unauthorised or non-compliant poster displays. Being aware of and adhering to these regulations is crucial to avoid legal consequences and financial penalties.

4.3. Box office

Ticket sales reporting for a show in Europe can differ from one country to another due to specific national regulations. Nevertheless, here are some general steps to consider:

- **Verify national regulations**
First and foremost, familiarise yourself with the national regulations of the country where you intend to report your ticket sales. Each country may impose its own reporting standards, taxation policies, and accounting practices.

- **Register with tax authorities**
In most countries, you'll be required to register with the local tax authorities and acquire a tax identification number. This registration is essential for collecting and remitting VAT on ticket sales.

- **Choose a ticketing system**
Choose an appropriate ticketing system tailored to the unique needs of your travelling show. Various ticketing platforms and software solutions are available, designed specifically for live performances.

- **Generate invoices or tickets**
For every ticket sold, issue proper invoices or official tickets. Ensure that all requisite details, such as price, show date, venue location, ticket serial numbers, and more, are included.

- **Adhere to tax obligations**
Strictly adhere to tax obligations by fulfilling reporting and payment requirements related to VAT on ticketing revenue. Familiarise yourself with the applicable VAT rates in the respective country and adhere to prescribed declaration and payment deadlines[2].

It is highly advisable to seek guidance from local tax authorities and seek assistance from accounting professionals in the specific country where you plan to report your ticket sales. They will offer tailored advice and support to ensure compliance with prevailing legal regulations.

2 See also section 2.1.5 on VAT on ticketing revenue,

4.4. Networks and development agencies

Numerous networks and development agencies in Europe are available to assist companies with inquiries pertaining to regulations, authorisations, mobility, and various aspects of their business operations.

- **Circostrada** (based in France): Circostrada is the largest European network of contemporary circus and street arts professionals (more than 150 members in more than 40 countries). It promotes exchange, cooperation and the development of artistic practices in Europe. The network offers resources, training and advice to circus companies.
  https://www.circostrada.org
  info@circostrada.org

- **On the Move** (based in Belgium): On the Move is an international cultural network dedicated to facilitating the mobility of artists and cultural professionals. They offer comprehensive information, guidance, and resources pertaining to mobility concerns, encompassing topics such as visas, work permits, and regulations associated with the mobility of circus artists in Europe.
  https://on-the-move.org
  info@on-the-move.org

- **Pearle*** (based in Belgium): Pearle* - Live Performance Europe is a network of Performing Arts Employers in Europe. Pearle* is the leading organisation on EU and international regulatory issues that affect the day-to-day operation of live performance organisations.
  https://www.pearle.eu
  info@pearle.eu

4.5. Obstacles

The "Europeanisation" of the big top, which involves the spread of circus practices across Europe, brings forth new prospects for circus teams. However, this process comes with its fair share of challenges when it comes to advocating for the presence of the big top.

- **Language barriers**
  The linguistic diversity in Europe can hinder effective communication and collaboration among circus teams from different countries. Language barriers can impede the exchange of information, mutual comprehension, and the sharing of knowledge.

- **Regulatory differences**
  Each country has its own set of regulations and standards governing safety, labour, licensing, transportation, and more. These variations in regulations can complicate the ability of circus teams to travel and perform across European borders.

- **Financial constraints**
  Organising a European tour can be a costly endeavour. Expenses related to transportation, accommodation, promotion, and logistics can pose a significant financial burden for circus teams, especially smaller organisations with limited resources.

- **Lack of network and partnerships**
  Establishing a network of contacts and robust partnerships is essential for the Europeanisation of the big top.

However, circus teams may encounter challenges in connecting with industry stakeholders in different countries due to limited visibility, resources, and contacts.

- **Preservation of cultural identities**

Each country boasts its own circus traditions and unique cultural characteristics. Some artists and companies may be committed to preserving their cultural identity and may be hesitant to engage in a Europeanisation process that could dilute their cultural distinctiveness.

- **Logistical complexity**

Arranging a tour across Europe entails intricate logistical management, particularly concerning the coordination of dates, performance venues, transportation of equipment and personnel, as well as administrative formalities.

Despite these obstacles, the circulation of big tops in Europe also brings forth numerous opportunities and advantages: it fosters cultural exchanges, artistic diversity, cross-border collaboration and contributes to promoting circus as a vibrant art form across the European continent. By surmounting these challenges, circus teams and cultural practitioners can enjoy greater visibility, expanding their audiences, and heightened recognition for their work.

4.6. Tips

Whether you are embarking on a tour, engaged in discussions with a cultural institution, or venturing out on your own, it is of paramount importance to be thoroughly prepared and well-informed about the distinct challenges that may arise when working with a big top.

In the following sections, we will delve into some "Top Tips" and "Good to Know" aspects specific to big tops. These practical insights and helpful reminders are designed to assist you in navigating this exciting, yet often demanding realm. By keeping these recommendations at the forefront of your mind, you can enhance your prospects for success and seize rewarding opportunities both in terms of artistic expression and professional growth.

4.6.1. Important points to remember

- Effective communication within your team is crucial. It is imperative that all stakeholders become well-informed about the intricacies and current challenges.

- It's worth noting that administrative and organisational deadlines can vary across European countries, potentially leading to complications and requiring added patience during negotiations and interactions between entities from different countries.

- As previously mentioned, touring across multiple European countries can entail significant expenses and intricate logistical arrangements. Everyone involved must consider the costs associated with transportation, accommodations, meals, equipment, and other tour-related expenditures. Financial constraints can indeed pose a substantial obstacle. However, there are feasible solutions, such as seeking partners to share the tour and transportation costs (collaboration between the company and the organiser) and strategically selecting cities for hosting shows (which may also be a requirement for obtaining mobility assistance from the European Union or your national government).

- To prevent any unforeseen issues, it is advisable to consult the collective agreements relevant to your sector to clarify the reimbursement terms for travel and return expenses.

- Every team member should be mindful of European countries' cultural and linguistic distinctions. The performances may require adaptation and tailored marketing to align with local nuances. Proficiency in multiple languages can be advantageous for fostering effective communication with organisers and the audience.

- Local and national safety standards may entail specific requirements for big top construction, fire safety protocols, emergency evacuation procedures, accessibility for individuals with disabilities, and more. It is essential to ensure that your installations meet these standards and consider having the big top inspected before performing.

4.6.2. Some practical advice

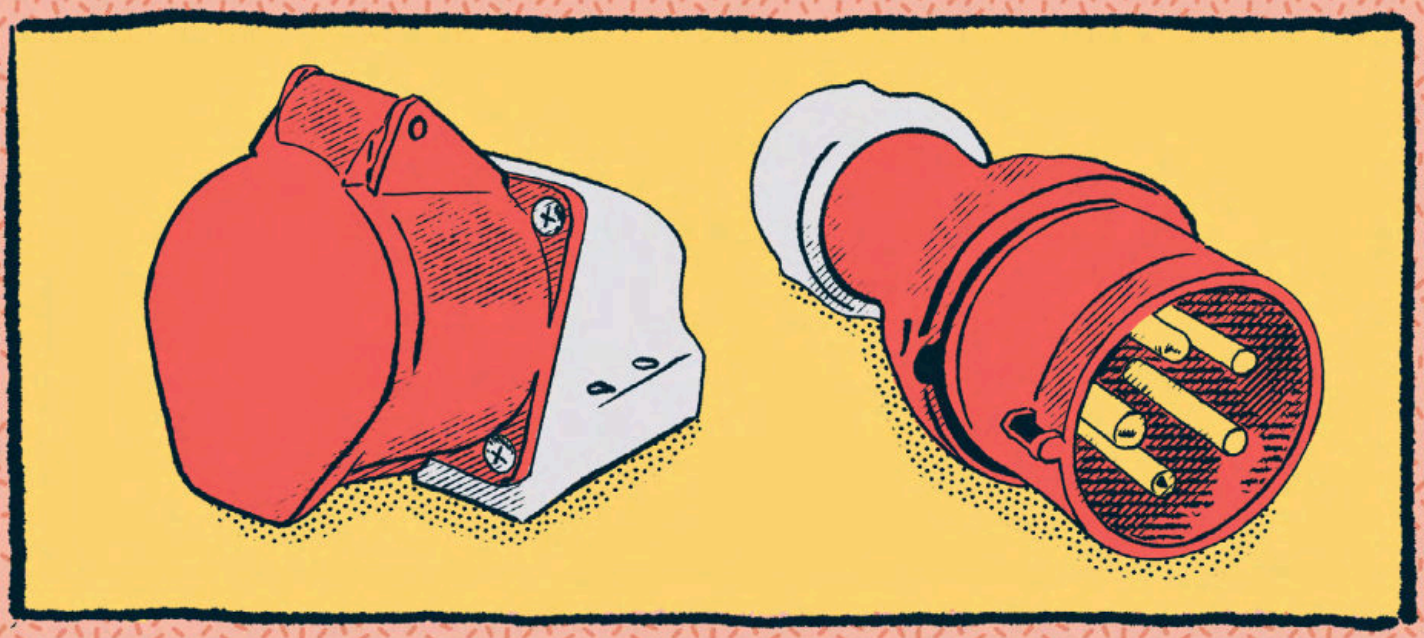
- Producers can lend their big tops to the organisers for them to present other shows. In such cases, various forms of collaboration can be considered, including renting the tent to the organiser, sharing the ticket revenue generated, or even lending the tent. The possibilities are flexible and can be tailored to the specific needs and preferences of both parties.

However, it's important to acknowledge that certain costs are associated with this arrangement:
  - Supervision: It's essential to designate one of the technicians to remain on-site and oversee how the tent is used.
  - Insurance: Both parties should inform their respective insurance providers, as there may be additional costs or considerations related to this arrangement.

- Consider creating a formal agreement that outlines the terms and conditions of the provision. In mutual agreement cases, these conditions can be adjusted freely by both parties, except for necessary expenses.

- Furthermore, offering workshops and meetings can establish a direct and interactive connection with local communities. These gatherings provide valuable engagement opportunities and facilitate lasting connections with local professionals, artists, and cultural organisations. Such connections can lead to future collaborations, artistic exchanges, and opportunities for mutual growth and development.

- Keep in mind that audiences typically prefer not to travel long distances to attend a show. To promote a shared and eco-friendly tour experience, consider establishing a presence or seeking partners within a maximum radius of 75 km to make the performances more accessible to local audiences.





5 TECHNICAL, LOGISTICS, AND SECURITY



When embarking on a European tour or hosting a big top, it's crucial for artists, companies, and organisations to be aware of a range of rules and technical, transportation, logistical, and security considerations related to big top installation. Adhering to these rules is essential to ensure the smooth execution of shows and the safety of the audience, artists, and staff involved.

It's important to note that these rules can vary between European countries. In this chapter, we will highlight the primary topics that should be addressed in the pre-planning stages and considered throughout the establishment or hosting project. However, all parties involved must reach out to the relevant authorities to ensure they have the most up-to-date information. Whenever possible, we will make every effort to provide you with contact information for the authorities responsible for the topics discussed.

5.1. Traffic regulations for heavy goods vehicles in the European Union

For artists and companies planning to travel within the European Union using heavy goods vehicles (HGV), it's essential to consider various specific regulations.

5.1.1. Paperwork

When travelling across Europe in a heavy goods vehicle, it is imperative to carry the required documents inside the vehicle's cabin. These documents are obligatory and vital for ensuring your safety, adherence to road regulations, and smooth border crossings. Whether you are a professional driver or a transporter, being well-informed about the necessary documents and having them readily available is essential for a trouble-free journey.

Listed below are the documents that must be readily accessible within the truck's cabin.

- **Driving licence**
The driver of the heavy goods vehicle must possess a valid driving licence appropriate for the category of heavy goods vehicle they intend to operate. Licensing requirements may vary from one country to another, but generally, a Category C or C+E driving licence is necessary to operate a heavy goods vehicle.

- **On-board documents**
While travelling in a heavy goods vehicle, specific documents must be kept on board, including vehicle insurance papers, vehicle registration certificate, and a certificate of technical conformity.

- **Vehicle insurance**
Suitable insurance for the heavy goods vehicle in use is essential. This insurance must be valid and provide coverage for public liability, along with any additional specific coverage requirements mandated by each country you pass through.

- **Traffic and parking rules**
Companies must adhere to the traffic and parking regulations enforced in each European Union country. This encompasses speed limits, overtaking protocols, driving and rest periods regulations, parking regulations, and more.

- **Customs formalities**
If you are transporting animals, props, or other items that are subject to customs regulations, you may need to complete customs formalities when crossing borders. It is crucial to adhere to the customs rules and requirements of each country you are travelling through.

It is essential to acknowledge that while the Schengen Area countries typically enjoy free movement of people and goods, there may be distinct regulations concerning heavy goods vehicles, considering their size, weight, and safety standards. Exceptions and specific regulations regarding company mobility may apply. Each member country within the Schengen Area could have unique regulations and vehicle circulation criteria.

For the most current and precise information about the specific regulations enforced in a particular country, it is advisable to contact the competent authorities of that country. These authorities may include the Ministry of Transport, law enforcement agencies, or transport regulatory bodies.

5.1.2. Size of the heavy goods vehicles

The regulations regarding truck dimensions are largely standardised on roads within the Schengen Area. Typically, these rules are as follows:

- **Total authorised weight (GVWR)**
The maximum permissible GVWR (Gross Vehicle Weight Rating) for heavy goods vehicles is generally 40 tonnes. This weight limit encompasses both the vehicle's weight and its load.

- **Vehicle dimensions**
Within the European Union, heavy goods vehicles are typically subject to the following maximum dimensions:
Maximum Height: 4 metres
Maximum Width: 2.55 metres
Maximum Length: 16.5 metres for articulated vehicles (tractor and trailer) and 18.75 metres for vehicles with multiple trailers (tractor, trailer, and additional trailer).

- **Hitches and trailers**
Companies using hitches and trailers must adhere to road safety regulations, particularly regarding signalling, lighting, and braking.

Nevertheless, it's important to be aware that certain countries may have variations and specific regulations.

- **Cyprus**
The maximum permissible GVWR for heavy goods vehicles in Cyprus is generally 44 tonnes.
In Cyprus, the practice of double-hauling vehicles is uncommon and generally not allowed. Cyprus' road traffic regulations do not include specific provisions for double hitching.

- **Finland**
Finland authorises long road combinations, also called "EuroCombi" or "Ecocombi". These sets can measure up to 34.5 metres in length and have a GVWR of 76 tonnes. They are subject to specific routes and traffic restrictions. Articulated vehicles, such as semi-trailers and trailers, are also permitted in Finland. The maximum dimensions for these vehicles are generally 24 metres in length, 4.4 metres in height and 2.55 metres in width.

- **Greece**
Maximum authorised weight for articulated vehicles: · 44 tonnes.

- **Ireland**
Maximum authorised weight for articulated vehicles: · 44 tonnes.
Maximum authorised dimensions: 4.3 metres (maximum height), and either 18.75 metres for articulated vehicles or 12 metres for non-articulated vehicles (maximum length). Double hitching is not permitted on public roads in Ireland.

- **Italy**

Maximum authorised weight for articulated vehicles: up to 44 tonnes.
In Italy, the use of double hitching is generally prohibited, but it may be authorised under certain conditions, particularly regarding the dimensions and weights of the vehicles.

- **Malta**

Double hitching is prohibited in Malta.

- **Norway**

The allowable total weight in Norway varies depending on the vehicle type, the number of axles, and the hitch configuration. Maximum weights can reach up to 50 tonnes for articulated heavy goods vehicles. Additionally, the maximum allowed length for articulated heavy goods vehicles in Norway is 24 metres, which encompasses the combined length of the tractor and trailer.

- **Portugal**

Maximum authorised weight for articulated vehicles: · 44 tonnes.
Maximum authorised dimensions: maximum height of 4.30 metres, and maximum length of 18.75 metres for articulated vehicles or 12 metres for non-articulated vehicles (19 metres for vehicles with double hitch).

- **Slovenia**

Maximum authorised weight for articulated vehicles: · 40 tonnes for main roads and · 10 tonnes for secondary roads. For non-articulated vehicles: up to 26 tonnes for main roads and up to 10 tonnes for secondary roads.

- **Spain**

In Spain, double hitching is generally prohibited, unless specifically authorised in certain exceptional cases.

- **Sweden**

Sweden allows long road combinations, with vehicle combinations longer than the European standard. The sets can measure up to 25.25 metres in length and have a GVW of 60 tonnes.
Articulated vehicles, including semi-trailers and trailers, can be used in Sweden. The maximum dimensions for these vehicles are generally 24 metres in length, 4.5 metres in height and 2.6 metres in width.

- **The Netherlands**

Maximum authorised dimensions: maximum length of 18.75 metres for non-articulated vehicles.

- **United Kingdom**

The UK has specific rules regarding vehicle weight and dimensions, including a 44 tonne GVWR limit. Additionally, there are specific rules for vehicle dimensions, including a maximum height of 4.95 metres and a maximum width of 2.55 metres. Double hitching is generally prohibited on UK roads, with some specific exceptions for agricultural vehicles or certain types of transport.

It is strongly advised to consult the relevant authorities in each European Union country to obtain accurate and current information.

5.1.3. Who to contact

To access country-specific information on traffic regulations, consider consulting the following sources and organisations:

- **Competent national authorities**

Reach out to the national authorities responsible for road traffic, road safety, or transport in each European Union country. They can offer comprehensive details on big top convoy regulations specific to their region.

- **Professional associations**

Professional associations, both at the national and international levels, can be valuable resources. They can provide insights and guidance on country-specific regulations and best practices for company traffic.

- **Ministries of Agriculture or Animal Welfare**

If your transportation concerns involve animals, agriculture or animal welfare ministries can provide essential information. They can offer specific guidelines and requirements for transporting animals safely and in compliance with regulations.

It is advisable to consult multiple sources and directly contact the relevant authorities to ensure you have accurate and up-to-date information regarding the regulations applicable in each European Union country where you intend to operate a heavy goods vehicle.

Countries	Organisations	Link
Austria	**Austria Bundesministerium für Klimaschutz, Umwelt, Energie, Mobilität, Innovation und Technologie (BMK):** the Austrian Federal Ministry of Climate, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology is the government body responsible for regulating transport in Austria.	BMK website: https://www.bmk.gv.at/
Belgium	**Agence wallonne pour la Sécurité routière (AWSR):** AWSR is the competent body for road safety in Wallonia. They can provide specific information on regulations and requirements for circulation of circus teams in Wallonia. **Vlaamse Stichting Verkeerskunde (VSV):** the VSV is the competent body for road safety in Flanders. They can provide specific information on regulations and requirements for circulation of circus teams in Flanders.	AWSR Website: https://www.awsr.be/ VSV website: https://www.vlaamsestichtingverkeerskunde.be/
Bulgaria	**Executive agency "Automobile Administration":** executive agency responsible for regulating and supervising road traffic in Bulgaria.	Automobile Administration website: https://www.rda.government.bg/
Cyprus	**Cyprus Road Transport Department:** body responsible for regulating and supervising road traffic in Cyprus	Cyprus Road Transport Department website: http://www.mcw.gov.cy/mcw/rtd/rtd.nsf/index_en/index_en?OpenDocument
Croatia	**Ministarstvo mora, prometa i infrastrukture (Ministry of the Sea, Transport, and Infrastructure):** government body responsible for regulating transport in Croatia. **Hrvatski Autoklub (Croatian auto club):** national automobile organisation in Croatia.	Ministry website: https ://mmpi.gov.hr/ Website of the Croatian Auto Club: https://www.hak.hr/

Czechia	**Ministry of Transport:** government body responsible for regulating transport in Czechia.	Ministry website: https://www.mdcr.cz/
Denmark	**Transport-, Bygnings- og Boligministeriet (Ministry of Transport, Construction, and Housing):** the government body responsible for regulating transport in Denmark.	Ministry website: https://www.trm.dk/
Estonia	**Transpordiamet (Road Administration):** body responsible for the regulation and supervision of road traffic in Estonia.	Transportiamet website: https://www.transpordiamet.ee/
Finland	**Liikenne- ja viestintävirasto Traficom (Transport and Communications Agency):** Traficom is the body responsible for the regulation and supervision of road traffic in Finland.	Traficom website: https://www.traficom.fi/
France	**Ministère de la Transition écologique et Solidaire (Ministry of Ecology):** the government body responsible for regulating transport in France.	Ministry website: https://www.ecologie.gouv.fr/
Germany	**Bundesanstalt für Straßenwesen (BASt) :** The Federal Road Research Institute is the body responsible for regulating and supervising road traffic in Germany.	BASt website: https://www.bast.de/BASt_2017/FR/
Greece	**Υπουργείο Υποδομών και Μεταφορών (Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport):** the government body responsible for regulating transport in Greece.	Ministry website: https://www.yme.gr/
Hungary	**Országos Rendőr-főkapitányság (Police):** The National Police of Hungary is responsible for enforcing traffic laws and regulations.	National police website: https://www.police.hu/
Ireland	**Road Safety Authority:** body responsible for road safety in Ireland.	Road Safety Authority website: https://www.rsa.ie/ Department of Transport website: https://www.gov.ie/en/organisation/department-of-transport/
Italy	**Polizia di Stato (State Police):** The National Police is responsible for enforcing traffic laws and regulations in Italy.	State Police website: https://www.poliziadistato.it/ Ministry website: http://www.mit.gov.it/
Latvia	**Ceļu Satiksmes Drošības Direkcija (Road Safety Directorate):** the body responsible for road safety in Latvia.	Road Safety Directorate website: https://www.csdd.lv/ Ministry website: https://www.sam.gov.lv/

Lithuania	**Valstybinės Kelių Transporto Inspekcijos (State road transport inspections):** the body responsible for road safety in Lithuania.	Website of the State Road Transport Inspectorate: http://www.vkti.lt/
Luxembourg	**Ministère de la Mobilité et des travaux publics (Ministry of Mobility and Public Works):** government body responsible for transport regulation in Luxembourg.	Ministry website: https://mmtp.gouvernement.lu/fr.html
Malta	**Malta Police Force:** Malta Police is responsible for enforcing traffic laws and regulations in Malta.	Malta Police Force website: https://pulizija.gov.mt/ Ministry website: https://www.transport.gov.mt/
Poland	**Ministerstwo Infrastruktury (Ministry of Infrastructure):** government body responsible for regulating transport in Poland.	Ministry website: http://www.mi.gov.pl/
Portugal	**Instituto da Mobilidade e dos Transportes (Institute of Mobility and Transport):** government body responsible for regulating transport in Portugal.	Website of the Institute of Mobility and Transport: http://www.imt-ip.pt/ Website of the National Republican Guard: https://www.gnr.pt/
Romania	**Autoritatea Rutieră Română (Romanian Road Authority):** The Romanian Road Authority is the body responsible for the regulation and supervision of road traffic in Romania.	ARR website: http://www.arr.ro/
Slovakia	**Ministerstvo Dopravy a Výstavby Slovenskej republiky (Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic):** government body responsible for regulating transport in Slovakia.	Ministry website: http://www.mindop.sk/
Slovenia	**Ministrstvo za Infrastrukturo (Ministry of Infrastructure):** government body responsible for regulating transport in Slovenia.	Ministry website: http://www.mzi.gov.si/
Spain	**Dirección General de Tráfico (DGT):** the body responsible for road traffic in Spain.	DGT website: https://www.dgt.es/
Sweden	**Transportstyrelsen (The Swedish Transport Agency):** government agency responsible for regulating transport in Sweden.	Transportstyrelsen website: https://www.transportstyrelsen.se/

The Netherlands	**Inspectie Leefomgeving en Transport (Environment and Transport Inspectorate):** body responsible for supervising and enforcing environmental and transport regulations in the Netherlands	Site web of the Human Environment and Transport Inspectorate: https://www.ilent.nl/ Ministry website: https://www.rijksoverheid.nl/ministeries/ministerie-van-infrastructuur-en-waterstaat
United Kingdom	**Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA):** the body responsible for regulating vehicles and drivers in the United Kingdom. **Traffic Commissioners:** independent authorities responsible for regulating freight transport and passenger services	DVSA website: https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/driver-and-vehicle-standards-agency Traffic Commissioners website: https://www.gov.uk/traffic-commissioners

5.2. Site and authorisations

Rules governing the placement of big tops within the European Union can vary from one country to another, typically under the jurisdiction of local and national authorities responsible for planning, security, and public event regulations.

Consider the following aspects:

- **Urban planning regulations**
Big tops must generally adhere to the urban planning regulations in effect within each country. These regulations may cover areas such as designated locations for temporary structures, height limitations, minimum distances from buildings and public roads, and more.

- **Safety and building standards**
Authorities often require tent structures to comply with building safety and fire prevention standards. This may entail inspections, certifications, and specific safety measures to ensure public well-being. Examples include provisions for emergency exits, fire extinguishers, electrical safety mechanisms, and more.

- **Environmental protection**
Certain countries may impose specific environmental protection regulations, particularly regarding waste management, water usage, energy conservation, and related concerns.

- **Administrative authorisations**
Apart from physical placement regulations, securing administrative authorisations may be necessary for organising public events. This can include obtaining permissions from local authorities and permits to use public spaces, among other administrative requirements.

Keep in mind that these regulations can vary significantly between countries, so it is essential to be informed about and compliant with the specific rules and standards in each European Union country where you intend to set up a big top.

5.2.1. Authorisations to set up a big top

A big top installation authorisation is a formal document issued by the competent authorities, granting permission to set up and utilise a big top to host a show or event in a specified location. This authorisation is critical as it validates that the big top's installation adheres to safety standards, local regulations, and the specific prerequisites associated with the chosen site.

The scope of an installation authorisation can encompass various facets, including compliance with construction norms, fire safety measures, accessibility for individuals with reduced mobility, crowd capacity, provision of sanitary facilities, waste management protocols, adherence to acoustic standards, and more. Typically, the application for big tops installation authorisation should be directed to the relevant authorities of the city or municipality where the event is planned.

This authorisation holds significance in ensuring that the big top is erected in a manner that guarantees the safety of attendees, performers, and personnel. It also guarantees that the event takes place in accordance with the prevailing rules and standards, considering factors related to environmental preservation, the neighbouring community, and urban surroundings. Prior to issuing the authorisation, the competent authorities often conduct inspections to verify compliance with all conditions.

It is noteworthy that the specific procedures and prerequisites for obtaining a big top permit can diverge from one city to another, and from one country to another. Consequently, it is imperative to engage with the local competent authorities to ascertain the precise steps for each circumstance. An authorisation obtained in one city does not automatically apply to another, even within the same country. Permits and procedures can vary across cities due to local regulations and unique specifications. Hence, for each location where you intend to set up your big top and host your event, it is generally imperative to reapply to the pertinent authorities.

Furthermore, it is advisable to initiate the application process for installation authorisation several months in advance, particularly for large-scale events or during busy periods. This advance planning allows the authorities ample time to thoroughly review your application, arrange necessary inspections, and ensure compliance with all safety and regulatory conditions.

5.2.2. Safety commissions

The safety commission is an organisation of experts and representatives from the competent authorities responsible for assessing and overseeing the security of public facilities and events. Its primary mission is to ensure the adherence to security standards and the identification and proper management of risks.

This commission comprehensively evaluates installations, equipment, and safety procedures. It reviews plans, fire prevention systems, emergency exits, contingency measures, lighting, electrical setups, evacuation methods, and more. It may also request adjustments or improvements to guarantee the safety of all attendees.

The safety commission aims to prevent fire hazards, accidents, and potentially perilous situations. Its goal is to safeguard the lives and well-being of artistic teams and the public by ensuring the implementation of all the necessary safety measures.

The necessity of involving a safety commission for a big top show can vary from one country to another and depends on local regulations. In many countries, obtaining authorisation from the relevant authorities is mandatory before organising a big top show.

It is imperative to research the specific legal requirements of the country where the show will take place. Organisers should consult with the competent authorities to determine if the involvement of a safety commission is mandatory and to understand the necessary steps for obtaining an authorisation.

Even in cases where it is not mandated by law, it is highly advisable to hire a safety commission to ensure the safety of all team members and the audience. This practice guarantees the implementation of all essential safety measures and ensures that the show proceeds under optimal conditions.

5.2.3. Who to contact

To request authorisation for the installation of a big top, as well as the involvement of a safety commission, it is typically essential to reach out to the relevant local authorities. The specific agencies responsible for security matters can vary depending on the jurisdiction and local regulations. Here are some examples of the authorities you can get in touch with:

- **Local authorities**
  Municipalities or city councils may be responsible for granting permits and supervising events and facilities.

- **Fire and rescue services**
  Local fire departments may be involved in assessing and approving fire safety measures.

- **Police services**
  Police services may be involved in assessing general security, traffic, and public order aspects of the event.

- **Health and safety organisations**
  In certain cases, health and safety organisations may be involved to assess occupational risks and prevention measures.

It is advisable to reach out to local authorities or relevant authorities for detailed information on the procedures to be followed and the appropriate contacts for requesting a safety commission. They will be able to offer guidance and provide specific details related to your region or country.

Please note that there may be nuances or specific requirements in certain countries:

Country	Relevant authorities to obtain accurate and specific information on regulations and authorisations
Austria	**Bezirksverwaltungsbehörde (District administrative authority).** These bodies are responsible for issuing permits for public events and temporary installations, including big tops. You will need to contact the administrative authority of the district where the event will take place to obtain specific information and submit your authorization request. **Magistrat (municipal administration).** In some Austrian cities, local magistrates may be responsible for issuing permits for public events. You will need to contact the municipal administration of the relevant city for specific information and requirements.
Bulgaria	**Община (Municipality)**. You will need to contact the municipal administration of the municipality where you plan to install the big top. They are responsible for issuing permits for public events and can provide you with specific information on permit procedures, security requirements and necessary documents. **Областна дирекция на МВР (Regional Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs)**. The regional directorate may be involved in assessing the general security of the event and temporary facilities, including big tops. They can provide advice on safety, traffic management, etc. **Пожарна безопасност (fire safety)**. The authorities responsible for fire safety can carry out inspections and give their approval for welcoming the public under the big top. You can contact the fire safety authorities at the local or regional level.
France	**Mairie (town hall).** You must contact the town hall of the town where you plan to install the big top. They are responsible for issuing permits for public events and can provide you with specific information on permitting procedures, security requirements and necessary documents. **Service départemental d'incendie et de secours - SDIS (Departemental fire and rescue service).** The SDIS is responsible for assessing fire safety measures for temporary installations, including big tops. They will carry out inspections and give their approval for welcoming the public under the big top. **Prefecture.** In certain cases, particularly for large-scale events, you may also need to contact the department prefecture. They may be involved in assessing the overall safety of the event and can provide additional advice.

Germany	**Ordnungsamt (Public order office).** The public order office of the municipality where you plan to install the big top is responsible for issuing permits for public events. It ensures that temporary installations, including big tops, meet safety standards and regulatory requirements. **Feuerwehr (Fire department).** The local fire department is involved in evaluating fire safety measures for temporary installations, including big tops. It can conduct inspections and approve welcoming the public under the tent. **Bauaufsicht (Construction supervision).** The local building control authority is responsible for approving temporary structures, including big tops, in terms of structural safety and other building requirements.
Lithuania	**Savivaldybė (town hall).** You will need to contact the town hall of the town where you plan to install the big top. They are responsible for issuing permits for public events and can provide you with specific information on permitting procedures, security requirements and necessary documents. **Ministry of Internal Affairs (Ministry of Internal Affairs).** This ministry is involved in the regulation and supervision of public events, including big tops. They can provide advice and guidance on authorisation procedures and security requirements. **Vidaus reikalų ministerija (State Fire Department Safety and Rescue Service).** The department is responsible for assessing fire safety measures for temporary installations, including big tops. They can carry out inspections and give their approval for welcoming the public under the big top.
Malta	**Malta Tourism Authority.** The Malta Tourism Authority can be contacted for information on regulations and requirements relating to public events, including welcoming the public under a big top. **Malta Police Force.** Malta Police may be involved in assessing the general security of the event and temporary facilities, including big tops. They can provide advice on safety, traffic management, etc. **Local Council.** You will need to contact the local council in the area where you plan to install the big top. They are responsible for issuing permits for public events and can provide you with specific information on permitting procedures, security requirements and necessary documents.
Portugal	**Câmara Municipal (town hall).** You will need to contact the town hall of the town where you plan to install the big top. Permits for public events are issued by the town hall. They can provide you with specific information on permitting procedures, security requirements and necessary documents. **Autoridade Nacional de Emergência e Proteção Civil (National Emergency and Civil Protection Authority).** This authority is responsible for security and civil protection in Portugal. They may be involved in assessing fire safety measures for temporary installations, including big tops, and can advise on safety standards. **Guarda Nacional Republicana (Republican National Guard).** The Guarda Nacional Republicana is a special police force in Portugal. They may be involved in assessing the general security of the event and temporary facilities, including big tops. They can advise on safety, traffic management, etc.

5.3. Cancellations

Unforeseen technical issues such as equipment failures, sound or lighting issues, or even logistical or weather constraints may arise, forcing artists and organisers to cancel performances.

Cancellation of a performance may be mandatory in several cases, including the following.

- **Adverse weather conditions**
If weather conditions pose an imminent risk to the safety of performers and audiences, such as high winds, storms, torrential downpours, or any other extreme weather situation, the cancellation of the show is necessary.

- **Major technical issues**
In the event of major technical issues that compromise the safety or integrity of the show, such as critical equipment failures, severe sound or lighting issues, or any other major malfunction that cannot be promptly resolved, cancellation may be the only reasonable option.

- **Health problems or injuries**
If a key performer or crew member is seriously ill or injured and cannot perform safely, it may be necessary to cancel the performance.

- **Failure to comply with local regulations**
If companies fail to comply with local safety regulations, licences, permits, or other legal requirements, local authorities may issue an order for the show to be cancelled.

- **Force majeure**
In exceptional situations such as a natural disaster, an epidemic, a nationwide strike, or any other major event beyond the control of the company or the organiser, cancellation may be unavoidable.

The decision to cancel a performance is made to ensure the safety of the audience, artists, and staff. It is made in consultation with the relevant authorities, technical experts, and show organisers, considering the regulations in force and people's safety.

Therefore, treating weather conditions and safety risks seriously is crucial when organising big top performances. It is recommended to heed the advice of the competent authorities and prioritise the safety of individuals above all else.

5.4. Risk assessment

Risk assessment for a circus show or event under a big top enables the evaluation of specific performance-related risks. Its purpose is to identify potential hazards, assess associated risks, and implement preventive measures to ensure the safety of audiences, artists, and staff.

While conducting a risk assessment for a big top show is not explicitly mandatory at the European Union level, personal safety and risk prevention are paramount considerations in event organisation, including big top shows. Many European Union countries have specific security regulations and standards in place for public events.

Therefore, it is highly recommended that organisers of big top shows write a risk assessment to identify and evaluate the risks associated with their event. This allows them, among other things, to establish appropriate security measures, develop an emergency response plan for incidents, provide training for their staff, and ensure the safety and awareness of the audience, artists, and staff.

A risk assessment for a big top show may cover several aspects, with the key ones outlined below:

- **Structural safety:** assessment of the strength and stability of the big top, including posts, cables, fixing systems, etc.
- **Electrical safety:** inspection of electrical installations to prevent the risk of fire, shock or short circuit.
- **Artist safety:** identifying risks linked to circus acts (injury, falls, etc.) and implementing appropriate security measures.
- **Public safety:** Protection measures for the public, such as emergency exits, evacuation routes, signage, etc.
- **Fire safety:** Assessing fire prevention, fire extinguishers, alarm systems, etc.
- **Health:** identification of risks linked to hygiene, waste management, access to drinking water, sanitary facilities, etc.
- **Logistics:** assessment of the risks linked to the installation and dismantling of the big top, the transport of materials, the handling of equipment, etc.

5.5. Sale of drinks and food

Regulations regarding the sale of drinks and food items within the European Union may vary from country to country, as each member state may have its own specific laws and regulations. However, there are also harmonised regulations at European Union level for some key issues related to food safety and hygiene.

Here are some important points to consider.

- **Licence and permissions**
In most European countries, the sale of alcoholic beverages and sometimes certain foods requires a specific licence or authorisation. The requirements and procedures for obtaining these licences may vary from country to country. It is important to check with the relevant authorities in the country where you wish to set up a bar for their specific requirements.
- **Hygiene and food safety**
The sale of food within the European Union is subject to strict hygiene and food safety standards. Regulation (EC) No. 852/2004 defines these standards for food hygiene. They include requirements such as compliance with good hygiene practices, proper food handling, product traceability, etc.
- **Allergens**
EU regulations require that prepackaged or non-prepackaged foods sold to consumers be clearly labelled regarding the allergens they contain. Food companies must inform consumers about the presence of any potentially harmful allergens, such as cereals containing gluten, shellfish, eggs, peanuts, dairy products, tree nuts, etc.
- **Labelling and nutritional information**
Prepackaged foods must also display mandatory nutritional information, including calories, amounts of fat, saturated fatty acids, carbohydrates, sugars, protein and salt.
- **VAT**
The sale of drinks and food is generally subject to value-added tax (VAT). VAT rates may vary by product and country. It is important to find out the applicable VAT rates in the country where you plan to sell.

It is essential to comply with the regulations in the country where you wish to sell drinks and food. It is strongly recommended to contact the relevant authorities, such as the health authorities or food regulatory bodies of the country concerned, for accurate and up-to-date information on the specific regulations to follow. Please note that in most European countries, these agencies are local. Ask for advice from the municipality where you wish to settle for correct and up-to-date information.

TOP TIP: THINK ABOUT THE BAR AND THE SNACKS!

Having a bar as part of your offer around the big top has many advantages. First, it allows you to add to the friendly atmosphere you may want to create for the audience before, during or after the performances.

In addition, the bar can constitute an additional and significant source of income. Sales of drinks and food can help financially support the tour and offset some expenses.

Remember to plan for the expenses related to the bar in your initial touring budget.
You don't necessarily need a lot of equipment to start your bar, but at least think about investing in a fridge and glasses.

Advice:
- Don't forget to bring some petty cash in the local currency.
- Favour the short circuit for your on-site supply.

5.6. Merchandise

Selling merchandise in Europe comes with certain regulations, and keeping a few key points in mind is important. These rules can differ from country to country, so let's review some crucial aspects to consider.

- **Compliance with safety standards**

Ensure that the products you intend to sell comply with the safety standards applicable in each European country. This involves meeting criteria related to material safety, providing adequate safety warnings, adhering to manufacturing requirements, and more. It's crucial to review the specific regulations in each country where you intend to sell your products.

- **Copyright and intellectual property rights**

Always adhere to copyright and intellectual property rights when selling merchandise. If you plan to use copyrighted logos, images, or characters, make sure you secure the required permissions from the rights holders. This ensures you're in compliance with the law and respect the intellectual property of others.

- **VAT**

Selling goods in the EU usually involves value-added tax (VAT). You must adhere to each country's tax rules where you conduct sales, ensuring that you accurately collect and report VAT as required.

- **Product labels**

Ensure that your product descriptions are clear and accurate, providing essential details, usage instructions, safety warnings, and any other information mandated by the legislation in each country where you sell your products.

- **Import and export**

If you're selling merchandise from non-EU countries, it's essential to adhere to import and export regulations, which encompass customs duties and necessary customs procedures.

Please be aware that this information serves as a general overview, and it is crucial to adhere to the specific regulations of each country where you intend to sell your products. It is advisable to seek guidance from tax authorities, regulatory agencies, and legal experts specialising in international trade for precise and current advice regarding selling goods in Europe.

TOP TIP: THINK ABOUT MERCHANDISE!

Selling merchandise such as t-shirts, caps, posters, glasses, or badges offers numerous benefits, both financially and in terms of promotion.

The sale can serve as a substantial additional source of income with relatively low initial costs. These sales can provide essential financial support for the tour.

Moreover, merchandise also serves as an excellent promotional tool. When audience members proudly wear these items, they become ambassadors who help spread the company's image and reputation as they integrate these products into their daily lives.

Here are some top tips:
- Consider offering merchandise at a flexible price, allowing the audience to choose what they want to pay.
- Opt for eco-designed and recyclable derivative products aligning with sustainability principles.

5.7. ATA carnet

The ATA Carnet (Admission Temporaire / Temporary Admission) is a crucial international customs clearance document mandatory for artists and companies planning to travel with their equipment outside the EU. This primarily applies to companies aiming to perform in the UK or Switzerland. The ATA Carnet simplifies the temporary importation of goods into a foreign country, allowing you to avoid paying customs duties or taxes upon entry. Typically, the ATA Carnet is filled out in the language of your home country, as the application is submitted to the customs or Chamber of Commerce office in your country of origin.

DEFINITION OF THE ATA CARNET

The ATA Carnet (Admission Temporaire / Temporary Admission) is a valuable tool that streamlines international trade processes, leading to simplified customs procedures and reduced operational expenses.

This document serves as a comprehensive replacement for the various customs paperwork typically required for temporary import operations (lasting up to one year), temporary exports, or transit activities. It allows foreign trade operators to conduct these operations without paying duties and taxes upfront. This procedure is particularly beneficial for participating in events like trade fairs or exhibitions, showcasing commercial samples, or utilising professional, scientific, or educational equipment.

The ATA Carnet can be applied in trade with countries that are signatories to the ATA Brussels Convention (1961) and/or the Istanbul Convention (1990), enabling the temporary admission of goods in compliance with international regulations.

The ATA Carnet streamlines international trade by eliminating the need for financial guarantees or deposits to cover customs duties and taxes. This simplification not only eases the process of conducting international business but also reduces bureaucratic hurdles. The ATA Carnet is widely accepted across more than 100 member countries of the ATA system.

It's important to understand that the ATA Carnet exclusively applies to non-perishable and non-consumable goods and is subject to certain conditions and limitations. Furthermore, temporarily imported goods must adhere to specified timeframes and remain in the same condition as when they first entered the country.

Additionally, please note that each ATA Carnet is valid for a defined period and a predetermined number of border crossings, as specified during the initial request. It cannot be reused for future trips unless these details have been pre-informed. Each ATA Carnet is tailored to one or more specific journeys (if multiple crossings are anticipated) and is only valid for the designated time frame, which does not exceed one year. Once the journey concludes, the ATA Carnet must be returned to the relevant customs authorities. A new ATA Carnet must be obtained if you require temporary cargo transportation again.

Here is the essential information to document in an ATA Carnet:

- **Holder's identity:** Provide complete contact details of the company or individual utilising the ATA Carnet.
- **Detailed goods description:** Thoroughly describe each item, including characteristics, quantities, values, and, if applicable, serial numbers.
- **Destination country:** Specify the country(ies) where the goods will be temporarily imported.
- **Expected usage duration:** Indicate the period within which the goods will be temporarily used in the destination country (within a maximum one-year timeframe).
- **Temporary use purpose:** State the reason for the temporary import of goods, such as an exhibition, trade fair, art event, etc.
- **Serial numbers and values of goods:** If applicable, record serial numbers or specific values of the goods in the ATA Carnet.
- **Signature and stamp:** The ATA Carnet holder must sign and affix the company stamp to the document.

Please keep in mind that specific requirements may differ from one country to another. It is therefore strongly advisable to consult with the customs authorities of the destination country to receive precise instructions on completing the ATA Carnet.

5.7.1. Where to get an ATA carnet

To apply for an ATA Carnet, you should contact the customs authorities in your company or organisation's country of residence. ATA Carnets are typically issued by approved national organisations, commonly Chambers of Commerce and Industry affiliated with the W.C.F (World Chambers Federation). These organisations are responsible for managing and issuing ATA Carnets, ensuring compliance with the rules and requirements outlined in the ATA Convention. They also are guarantors to Customs for operations conducted under the ATA Carnet.

However, it's important to note that certain countries may have designated alternative, competent authorities or bodies for ATA Carnet issuance. Therefore, contacting your country's Chamber of Commerce and Industry or a similar organisation is advisable for precise information regarding the ATA Carnet application process and the documentation required.

In specific European Union countries, organisations other than chambers of commerce may facilitate the ATA Carnet application. To navigate this efficiently, it is recommended that you investigate the specific competent authorities in each European Union country you intend to visit. Reach out to the relevant agency for detailed information and instructions on how to apply for an ATA Carnet.

TOP TIP: WHERE TO APPLY FOR AN ATA CARNET IN EUROPE

Countries	Competent authorities
Austria	The request for an ATA Carnet can be made to the Austrian Federal Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Wirtschaftskammer Österreich) but also to the Austrian Federal Chamber of Economy (WKÖ)
Belgium	The request for an ATA Carnet can be made to the Belgian Chamber of Commerce (Belgian Chamber of Commerce - Belgische Kamer van Koophandel)
Bulgaria	The request for an ATA Carnet can be made to the Bulgarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI)
Cyprus	The application for an ATA Carnet can be made to the Cyprus Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI)
Croatia	The application for an ATA Carnet can be made to the Croatian Chamber of Commerce (Hrvatska gospodarska komora, HGK)
Czechia	The application for an ATA Carnet is made to the local Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI)
Denmark	The application for an ATA Carnet can be made to the Danish Chamber of Commerce (Dansk Erhverv)
Estonia	Application for an ATA Carnet can be made to the Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Eesti Kaubandus-Tööstuskoda, EKT)
Finland	The application for an ATA Carnet can be made to the Chamber of Commerce of Finland (Keskuskauppakamari, Central Chamber of Commerce of Finland)
France	The application for an ATA Carnet can be made to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) in your department
Germany	The application for an ATA Carnet can be made to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Industrie- und Handelskammer, IHK) and is processed by the German Association for Industry, Commerce and Services (DIHK)
Greece	The application for an ATA Carnet can be made to the Greek Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Ελληνικό Επιμελητήριο Εμπορίου και Βιομηχανίας)
Hungary	The application for an ATA Carnet can be made to the Hungarian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Magyar Kereskedelmi és Iparkamara, MKIK)

Ireland	The application for an ATA Carnet can be made to the Chamber of Commerce of Ireland (Chambers Ireland)
Italy	The application for an ATA Carnet can be made to the Italian Chamber of Commerce (Camera di Commercio Italiana)
Latvia	The application for an ATA Carnet can be made to the Latvian Chamber of Commerce (Latvijas Tirdzniecības un Rūpniecības Kamara, LTRK)
Lithuania	The application for an ATA Carnet is made to the Lithuanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Lietuvos pramonininkų konfederacija, LPK)
Luxembourg	The application for an ATA Carnet is made to the Chamber of Commerce of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg
Malta	The application for an ATA Carnet is made to the Malta Chamber of Commerce.
Poland	The request for an ATA Carnet is made to the Polish Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Polska Izba Handlu i Przemysłu, PIH)
Portugal	The application for an ATA Carnet can be made to the Agência para o Investimento e Comércio Externo de Portugal (Portugal Agency for Investment and Foreign Trade)
Romania	The application for an ATA Carnet is made to the Romanian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Camera de Comerț și Industrie a României, CCIR)
Slovakia	The application for an ATA Carnet is made to the Slovak Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Slovenská obchodná a priemyselná komora, SOPK)
Slovenia	The application for an ATA Carnet is made to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Slovenia (Gospodarska Zbornica Slovenije, GZS)
Spain	The request for an ATA Carnet can be made to the Chamber of Commerce of Spain (CámaraOfficial de Comercio de España) but also with the Customs and Tax Agency (Agencia Tributaria)
Sweden	The application for an ATA Carnet is made to the Swedish Chamber of Commerce and Industry (Swedish Chambers International, SCI)
The Netherlands	The application for an ATA Carnet is made at the Dutch Chamber of Commerce (Kamer van Koophandel, KvK)
United Kingdom	The application for an ATA Carnet is made to the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC)

5.7.2. The cost of an ATA Carnet

The cost of obtaining an ATA Carnet can fluctuate based on various factors, including the issuing country, the destination country, the validity period, and the value of the goods covered by the carnet. Typically, the fees associated with obtaining an ATA Carnet encompass the following:

- **Administrative Costs**
These fees are collected by the organisation responsible for issuing the ATA Carnet, such as the Chamber of Commerce and Industry or a similar organisation. The specific administrative charges may vary from one country to another and can be either a fixed amount or calculated as a percentage of the total value of the goods.

- **Warranty Fees**
In certain situations, it might be necessary to provide a financial guarantee to cover potential customs duties and taxes if the goods are not re-exported as required. The cost of these fees is contingent on the value of the goods covered by the Carnet and the customs policies of the destination country.

For precise details regarding the fees and procedures associated with obtaining an ATA Carnet, it is advisable to contact the ATA Carnet issuing organisation in your own country. They will be able to provide you with specific information tailored to your circumstances.

5.7.3. Time required to prepare an ATA Carnet

It's a good idea to kickstart the ATA Carnet application process several weeks before your planned usage date. The exact timeframe can vary based on factors like the issuing country, customs complexity, and the number of pending requests.

Generally, it's wise to allow at least two to four weeks to secure your ATA Carnet. This accounts for administrative tasks, document checks, and application processing. Keep in mind that potential delays related to customs procedures in the destination country should also be considered.

To ensure you have your ATA Carnet ready for your project or trip, it's best to reach out to your country's ATA Carnet issuing organisation as soon as you know you'll need it. This way, you can get specific deadlines and ensure a smooth process.

5.7.4. Travelling without an ATA Carnet

Travelling without an ATA Carnet can lead to various risks and inconveniences, including:

- **Payment of customs duties and taxes**
Temporarily importing goods without an ATA Carnet might require you to pay customs duties and entry taxes. This can result in extra financial expenses that could have been avoided with a valid ATA Carnet.

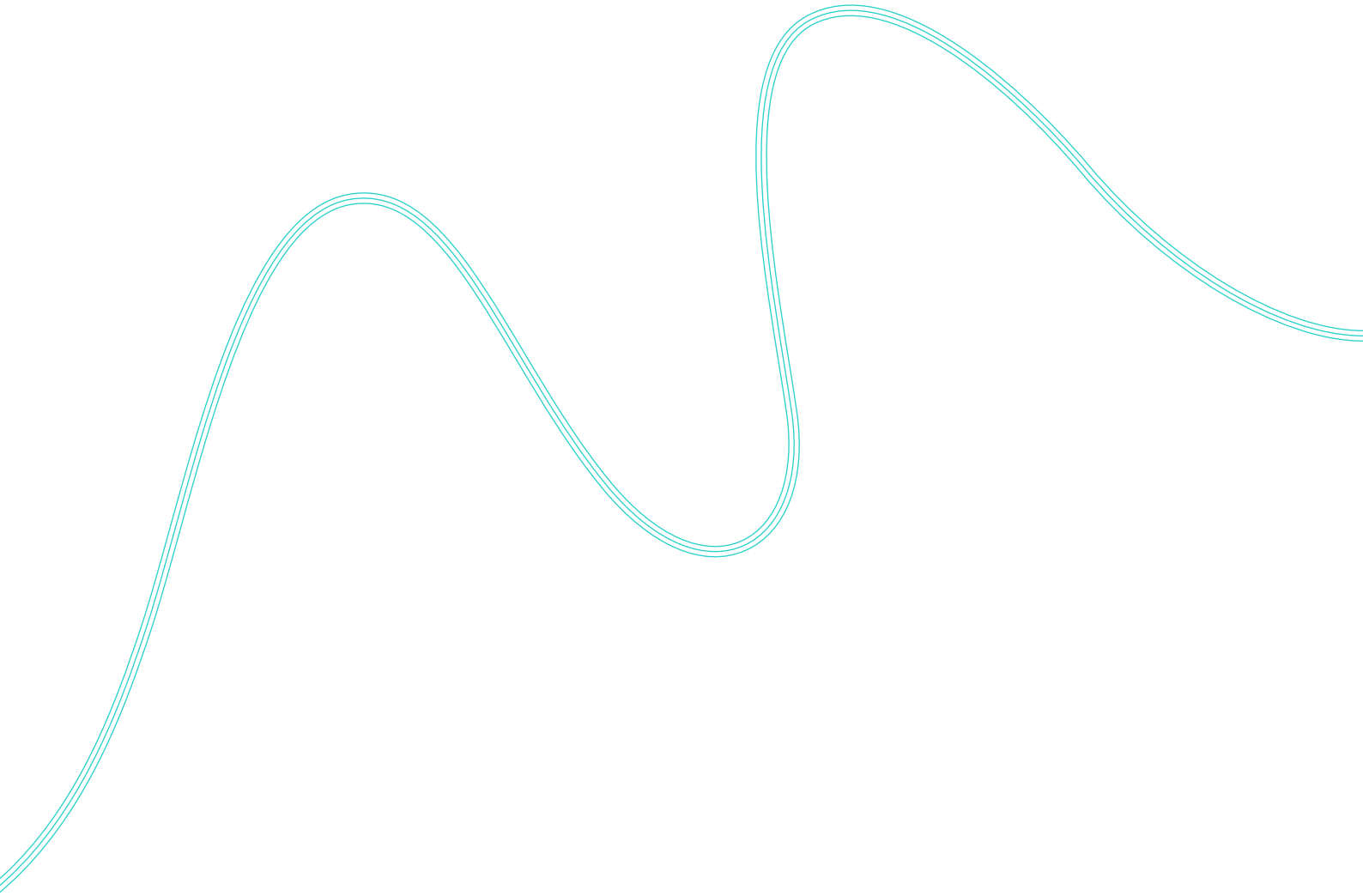
- **Extended customs formalities**
Without an ATA Carnet, you'll need to follow standard customs procedures, which can be more time-consuming and intricate. This may involve additional paperwork, financial guarantees, or more thorough inspections, leading to delays and extra hassles.

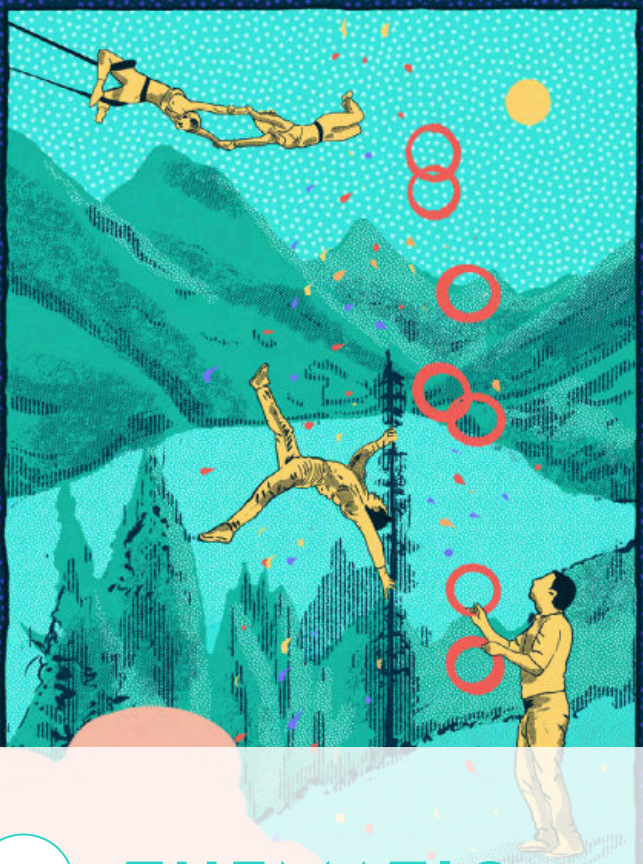
- **Risk of customs non-compliance**
Customs authorities could impose fines or penalties if you fail to comply with the country's customs regulations.

Travelling without a valid ATA Carnet might be seen as violating temporary importation rules, potentially resulting in legal and financial repercussions.

- **Difficulties during re-export**
The absence of an ATA Carnet may cause difficulties when re-exporting goods. Customs authorities might ask for proof of temporary goods entry, complicating the re-export process and causing logistical issues.

To simplify international trade, avoid additional expenses, and reduce administrative complications when temporarily importing goods, it is highly recommended to adhere to current customs regulations and obtain an ATA Carnet when necessary.







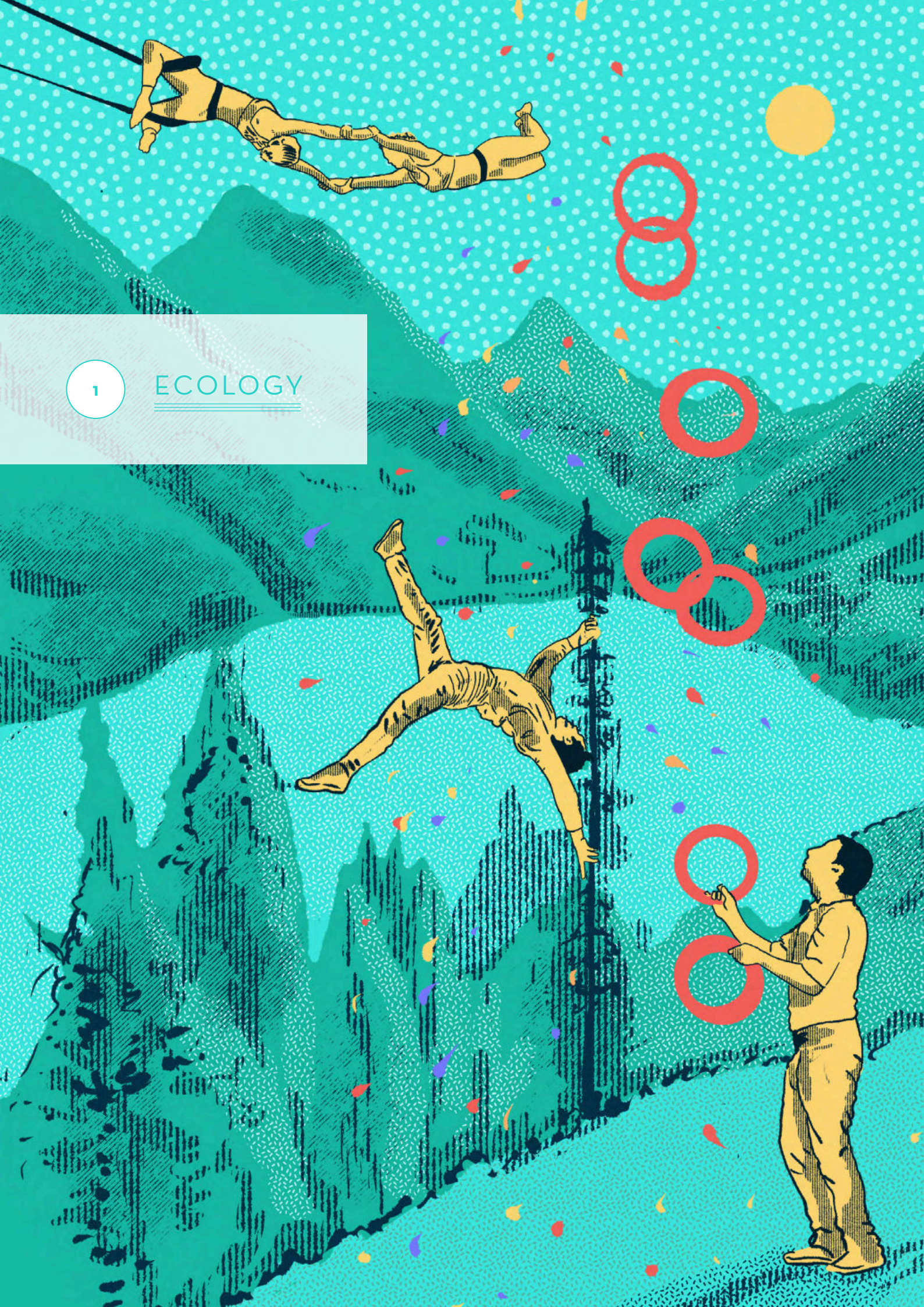
III

THEMATIC ARTICLES





In this section, we've enlisted the expertise of authors to craft in-depth articles covering specific and cross-cutting topics that go beyond the scope of practical guidelines. To enhance the depth of these analyses, we've incorporated relevant European legislation where necessary. These contributions, authored by experts and bolstered by a European legislative context, serve to deepen our comprehension of the subjects at hand. They offer comprehensive and pertinent insights for those embarking on a big top tour in Europe.


1
ECOLOGY

Environmental consciousness has become indispensable, and it's impossible to broach the topic of big tops without delving into ecology. In this section, we draw upon the knowledgeable insights of an environmental specialist, followed by an examination of specific measures designed to assist you on your ecological journey. Our objective is to debunk any misconceptions regarding big tops by shedding light on their actual ecological footprint and presenting available solutions to facilitate your transition towards a more eco-friendly approach. By exploring these measures, our aspiration is to foster responsible utilisation of big tops while contributing to the preservation of our invaluable ecosystem for generations to come.

1.1. "Is the travelling circus a path to sustainability?" by Louis Cormerais

The travelling circus often falls victim to caricatures on the subject of sustainability, with images of old trucks, oil heating, and excessive energy consumption coming to mind.

To be fair, we must contextualise the circus and have a closer look. To be itinerant, one must choose a life on the move with minimal resources and constant mobility. The circus, therefore, needs to be nimble, efficient, adaptable, and self-sufficient – in essence, an all-terrain operation. From open fields to football stadiums, from vacant lots to the most prestigious urban venues, the circus seamlessly integrates into each location, embracing values of proximity, freedom, and accessibility. It serves as both a "village within a village", and a cultural institution at the doorstep of communities. Since its inception, the circus has championed culture for all, and its simplicity allows it to traverse Europe, offering diverse perspectives on our societies and cultures without ever trying to persuade.

While the circus relies on fossil fuels for travel, audience members can choose eco-friendly modes of transportation like walking or cycling. When it uses fossil fuels for heating during winter performances, it promptly switches them off when the last audience member departs. As the big top moves between tours, its environmental footprint is effectively zero. In the realm of sustainable development, the circus encompasses three fundamental pillars: social, economic, and environmental.

Of course, like all human activity, the circus has room for improvement. Yet, it is precisely because these issues are ingrained in the circus's essence that it continually evolves and reflects on its practices. This intrinsic dynamism and self-awareness make circuses durable and sustainable. Circuses are actively committed to energy transition and resource efficiency through various initiatives: reusing and reimagining scenographies from one production to another, experimenting with wood or pellet heating, recycling heated air, regulating indoor temperatures, optimising convoys often up to vehicle ceilings, investing in energy-efficient outdoor lighting, creating lighting designs mindful of electricity consumption, utilising second-hand costumes and accessories, adopting thoughtful touring routes, powering locally and responsibly for teams and audiences, organising conferences and professional meetings on sustainable development, and more.

In essence, the travelling circus constitutes a sustainable cultural model thanks to its capacity to address pressing questions, its remarkable adaptability, and its commitment to improvement. Looking ahead, the key challenge for travelling circuses in the next decade lies in integrating research and sustainable development into their economic framework. In fact, most businesses and even music festivals have already embedded this approach into their budgets, elevating sustainable development to a position as vital as public relations or communication. It is crucial to consider designated roles for these considerations, enabling each trade to have a dedicated person responsible for guiding them in the process and evaluating the actions taken. Drawing lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic, where each circus and venue had a representative to adapt to health protocols, we should treat global warming with the same urgency. If we act effectively, the travelling circus can undergo rapid and transformative changes, just as it did during the pandemic.

Louis Cormerais is an environmental educator technician (BEATEP), director of international construction sites (environment and heritage), a graduate in agriculture (gatherer of aromatic and medicinal plants), big top manager and technician for ten years, and founder of the Sustainable Circus Association.

1.2. Eco-friendly big top tours

In today's world, environmental concerns hold a growing significance in the eyes of the public, government bodies, funding institutions, and society as a whole. While there's a consensus on the necessity of environmental action, it can often be challenging to discern where to begin and how to proceed. To provide practical guidance, we've compiled a collection of accessible tools and resources that can assist you in embracing eco-friendly practices.

1.2.1. The research

In recent years, research and initiatives in the field of ecology for travelling structures in Europe have gained significant momentum. Artists, companies, and venues are increasingly committed to adopting environmentally friendly practices. Here are some of the ongoing research and initiatives in this domain.

Reduction of carbon footprint
Artists are actively working to minimise their carbon footprint. This involves using renewable energy sources, optimising tour routes to reduce fuel emissions, and implementing sustainable waste management practices.

Use of ecological materials
Researchers are exploring using ecological materials in constructing and renovating big tops and equipment. This includes considering recycled, biodegradable, or sustainably sourced materials.

Protection of biodiversity
European artists are actively supporting research aimed at conserving biodiversity. They are also focused on minimising their impact on local ecosystems when setting up in different regions. Studies are conducted to assess the effects of itinerant structures on local fauna and flora, with appropriate protection measures put in place.

Public awareness
Artists play a vital role in raising public awareness about environmental issues. They incorporate messages related to nature conservation, sustainability, and other ecological concerns into their shows and interactive activities.

These efforts reflect a growing commitment within the artistic community to address ecological challenges and promote responsible environmental practices.

1.2.2. Tools to implement an eco-responsible strategy

Several valuable resources and tools are available to assist in implementing an eco-responsible strategy. Here are some websites that can serve as informative sources.

- **ARTCENA (France)**
ARTCENA actively monitors sustainable development issues, providing regular updates on the latest reports, publications, experiments, artistic creations, and professional reflections related to sustainability in the arts.
https://www.artcena.fr/veilles-thematiques/developpement-durable

- **ARVIVA (France)**

ARVIVA is an association known as "Living Arts, Sustainable Arts", founded on the belief that live performances can play a significant role in addressing environmental issues. They bring together a wide range of stakeholders, including producers, technicians, agents, venues, festivals, artistic teams, entrepreneurs, and more, encompassing all disciplines and aesthetics.

https://arviva.org/

- **Creative Carbon Scotland (UK)**

Creative Carbon Scotland est une organisation basée en Écosse qui se concentre sur l'intersection entre les arts, la culture et l'environnement. Leur mission est de permettre aux individus et aux organisations du secteur culturel d'apporter une contribution positive à la lutte contre le changement climatique et de promouvoir la durabilité environnementale. Leur site contient de nombreuses ressources utiles:

https://www.creativecarbonscotland.com/

- **Green Art Lab Alliance - GALA**

Creative Carbon Scotland is a Scotland-based organisation focused on the intersection of arts, culture, and the environment. Their mission is to empower individuals and cultural organisations to contribute positively to the fight against climate change and promote environmental sustainability. Their website offers numerous valuable resources.

https://greenartlaballiance.com/practical-guides/

TOP TIP: GALA GUIDE TO GRANTS CONNECTING ARTS, CULTURE, CULTURAL MOBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

This guide, coordinated by On the Move, lists grants available in Europe to fund projects that link arts, culture, cultural mobility and sustainability: https://on-the-move.org/resources/funding/gala-funding-guide-arts-and-culture-projects-related-environmental-sustainability

- **Julie's Bicycle (UK)**

Julie's Bicycle is a non-profit organisation mobilising the arts and culture sector to take action on climate, environmental, and social issues. Originally founded by the music industry in 2007, they now collaborate with various arts and cultural organisations across the UK and internationally.

https://juliesbicycle.com

- **The Green Room (France)**

The Green Room is dedicated to supporting environmental and societal change within the music sector, performing arts, and culture as a whole. They work on developing strategies and co-creating solutions to reduce the environmental impact of cultural professionals.

https://www.thegreenroom.fr

- **The Theatre Green Book (UK)**

The Theatre Green Book is a collaborative effort between artists and sustainability experts to establish a common standard for producing theatre sustainably. This resource is freely accessible to everyone in the UK theatre sector and offers numerous valuable resources for producing shows and managing venues in an eco-friendly manner, which can also be applied to big tops.

https://theatregreenbook.com/

1.2.3. Developing an eco-responsible strategy

Developing an eco-responsible strategy is crucial for reducing your carbon footprint. Here are some ideas to help you start formulating your strategy.

Environmental footprint assessment
Begin by assessing your current environmental impact, covering areas like energy consumption, material usage, waste management, and transportation.

TOP TIP : HOW TO CALCULATE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

Tools like the Julie's Bicycle carbon calculator can help you calculate your carbon footprint and identify areas for improvement: https://juliesbicycle.com/our-work/creative-green/creative-climate-tools/

Adoption of sustainable practices
Implement sustainable practices across your operations. Opt for renewable energy sources, use recycled or biodegradable materials for sets and costumes, and promote recycling and material reuse.

TOP TIP: THINK ABOUT THE "GREEN RIDER"

Consider creating a green rider, an attachment to your technical sheet, where you can outline eco-friendly requests. This might include:

- Public travel:
– We ask that you and your ticket agents make information available to audience members regarding public transportation, biking, and carpooling options and promote them as much as possible. Please also send us this information as soon as possible so that we can also pass it on to our social media channels.
– Please provide secure on-site parking for the bicycles of attendees.

- Catering:
– We prefer foods such as fresh fruit or vegetables - if we don't eat them, you can offer them to staff or other people instead of throwing them away.
– Food and drinks must be organic, seasonal, locally sourced and with minimal disposable packaging. Please research and favour products with environmental credentials.

A comprehensive list of green rider ideas can be found: https://juliesbicycle.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/2018JB_GreenRider_Music.pdf

Reduced energy consumption
Identify ways to reduce energy consumption in your equipment and installations. Use energy-efficient LED lighting, optimise heating and cooling, and ensure equipment is turned off when not in use.

TOP TIP: IMMERSE YOURSELF IN THE THEATRE GREEN BOOK

Explore resources like the Theater Green Book's publications on producing shows and managing buildings with sustainability in mind. While not specifically tailored to big top shows, these books contain valuable information:

- Sustainable Productions: https://theatregreenbook.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/THEATRE-GREEN-BOOK-ONE_beta1.pdf
- Sustainable Buildings: https://theatregreenbook.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/11/GREEN-BOOK-2_00_beta.pdf

Public awareness
Use your platform to raise environmental awareness among your audience. Incorporate ecological messages into your shows and explain your eco-responsible actions to spectators.

TOP TIP: WRITE AND DISTRIBUTE YOUR ECO-RESPONSIBILITY CHARTER

Create an eco-responsibility charter that lists all the steps you're taking to be more environmentally friendly. Share this charter widely on your website, social networks, in contracts, and with your team.

Here you will find examples of eco-responsibility charters: https://nuage.arviva.org/index.php/s/tdCZ4qKZjPogZwk

Partnerships with eco-responsible companies
Collaborate with suppliers and partners who share your eco-friendly values. Choose companies that prioritise sustainable practices in material manufacturing and other areas.

Responsible waste management
Establish an effective waste management system, promoting sorting, recycling, and waste reduction.

Ecological certification
Consider obtaining certification as an eco-responsible company from recognised organisations if feasible. This will strengthen your commitment to ecology and enhance your credibility.

Continuous improvement
Set ecological goals and regularly measure your progress. Involve your entire team in this ongoing improvement process.

These ideas can help guide your journey towards becoming more eco-responsible and reducing your environmental impact.

1.3. European regulations

European Union regulations have become increasingly focused on mitigating the environmental impact of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) and promoting responsible transportation development[1]. These regulations apply to all types of HGVs travelling on EU roads, including those used by companies. Consequently, companies must adhere to relevant emissions standards and environmental regulations when employing heavy goods vehicles for their travel needs.

Key rules and measures to reduce the ecological impact of heavy goods vehicles encompass several aspects.

Air pollutant emissions: Regulations are in place to limit air pollutant emissions from HGVs. Compliance with emissions' standards is essential for minimising the environmental impact.

1 For more information, see the report "Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from heavy-duty vehicles in Europe" published by the European Environment Agency: https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/co2-emissions-of-new-heavy

Fuel consumption: There are rules to address fuel consumption and encourage the use of more fuel-efficient vehicles. Eco-driving practices can help reduce fuel consumption.

Waste management: Regulations related to waste management are important to ensure that waste generated during transportation is handled responsibly and does not harm the environment.

Emissions compliance: HGVs must adhere to emissions' standards to reduce their carbon footprint and minimise air pollution.

Weight and dimension limitations: Specific weight and dimension limitations are imposed on heavy goods vehicles to ensure safety and prevent road damage.

Traffic and road safety rules: Compliance with traffic and road safety rules is crucial for safe and responsible transportation.

When using heavy trucks to transport equipment, personnel, or animals, teams are required to follow these regulations regarding emissions, weight, dimensions, and other relevant traffic and road safety rules. This may involve using vehicles that meet emissions standards, adopting eco-driving practices to lower fuel consumption, and adhering to each country's specific regulations traversed during the journey.

It's important for companies and teams to stay informed about these regulations and to plan their transportation logistics accordingly to comply with the rules and minimise their ecological impact while on European roads.

1.3.1. At the European level

The European Union has recognised the significant impact of heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) on the environment and is implementing various measures to promote responsible transport development. These measures include:

- **Promotion of multimodal transport**
The EU encourages the development of multimodal transport systems that integrate various modes of transportation, such as road, rail, and inland waterways. This approach optimises transportation efficiency and reduces environmental impact. Measures may include financial incentives, the creation of intermodal infrastructure, and the establishment of ecological transport corridors.

- **Eco-driving awareness**
Initiatives are in place to raise awareness among heavy goods vehicle drivers about eco-friendly driving practices. These initiatives provide guidance on economical driving, speed management, route optimisation, and more to help reduce fuel consumption and CO2 emissions.

- **Sustainable Logistics**
The EU supports sustainable logistics practices, including concepts like green urban logistics, load consolidation, and the use of cleaner vehicles. These measures aim to minimise travel distances and reduce carbon emissions, especially in urban areas.

- **Transition to cleaner fuels**
The EU promotes the use of cleaner fuels such as liquefied natural gas (LNG) and electric vehicles, including heavy-duty electric trucks. Infrastructure development for charging electric vehicles is also supported through EU aid programs.

- **Emissions standards for vehicles**
The EU has established strict emissions standards for new heavy goods vehicles, including Euro VI and soon-to-come Euro VII standards[2]. These standards are designed to reduce emissions of air pollutants, such as nitrogen oxides (NOx) and fine particles, from HGVs.

2 https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda_22_6496

These measures are part of the EU's broader efforts to mitigate the environmental impact of heavy goods vehicles and promote sustainable transportation practices across the region. Companies and teams involved in transportation should stay informed about these regulations and initiatives to ensure compliance and contribute to a more environmentally friendly transportation sector in Europe.

1.3.2. On a national level

Some EU countries have put in place additional measures to go beyond European standards:

- **Ecotax on heavy goods vehicles**

Certain countries of the EU apply ecological taxation systems for heavy goods vehicles based on their CO_2 emissions or their energy efficiency.

Country	Name of the eco-tax	Effect
Austria	GO-Maut	The fee is calculated based on the number of axles for vehicles over 3.5 tonnes.
Belgium	Taxe Kilométrique	An intelligent mileage collection system. It concerns heavy goods vehicles over 3.5 tonnes.
Czechia	Royalty fee	For vehicles over 12 tonnes only and depending on the number of axles.
Denmark	Eurovignette	For heavy goods vehicles over 12 tonnes.
Germany	LKW-Maut	The tax is for heavy goods vehicles weighing more than 7.5 tonnes travelling on motorways and national roads. The price depends on the pollutant class, number of axles and journey length.
Luxembourg	Eurovignette	For heavy goods vehicles over 12 tonnes.
Sweden	Eurovignette	For heavy goods vehicles over 12 tonnes.
The Netherlands	Eurovignette	For heavy goods vehicles over 12 tonnes.
United Kingdom	-	Foreign heavy goods vehicles over 12 tonnes are taxed for the duration of the journey depending on the type of vehicle, total weight and axles.

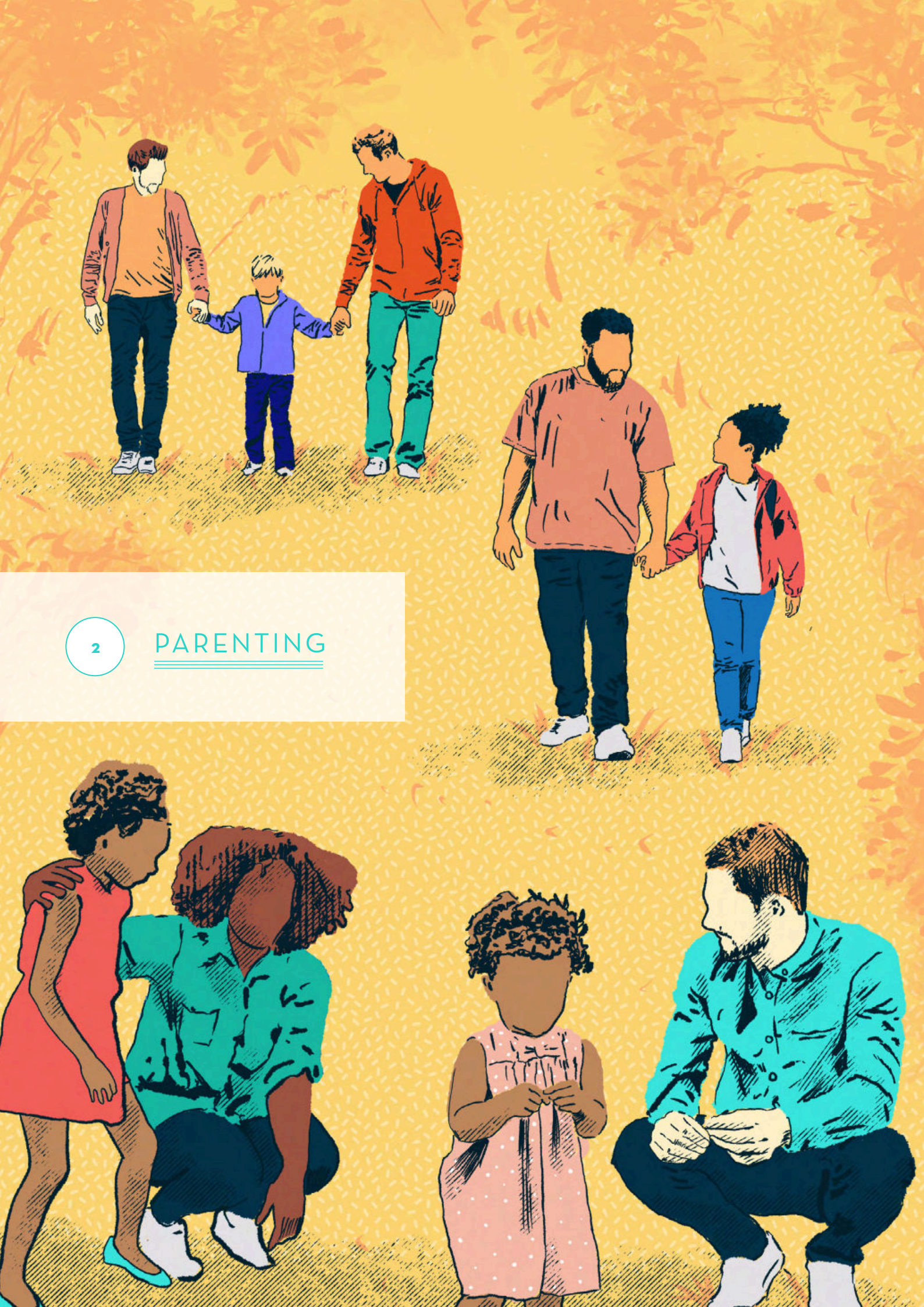
- **Financial incentives**

Certain countries of the EU offer financial incentives to encourage hauliers to adopt cleaner and more fuel-

efficient vehicles. This may include subsidies for the purchase of environmentally friendly vehicles, tax reductions or preferential toll rates for low-emission vehicles.

France	France has put in place financial aid for transport companies that opt for clean heavy goods vehicles, such as subsidies for the purchase of electric or natural gas trucks.
Germany	Germany offers subsidies for the purchase of electric heavy-duty trucks, as well as tax incentives for vehicles running on natural gas or liquefied gas.
Sweden	Sweden has incentives for clean heavy goods vehicles, including tax reductions and subsidies for environmentally friendly vehicles.
The Netherlands	The Netherlands offers subsidies and tax benefits to encourage the adoption of electric and hydrogen heavy-duty trucks.
United Kingdom	The UK also offers financial incentives for hauliers who choose cleaner HGVs, such as grants for the purchase of electric or low-emission vehicles.

All these efforts aim to reduce heavy goods vehicles' environmental footprint in the Schengen area and promote sustainable mobility practices. However, it's crucial for teams to research and understand the specific regulations and requirements of each EU country they plan to travel through. Compliance may involve obtaining certifications, permits, or additional authorisations based on the vehicle's characteristics and the nature of its activities. Being well-informed and prepared ensures a smooth and environmentally responsible journey within Europe.



2 PARENTING

Balancing motherhood, parenthood, and schooling within the travelling circus presents a distinctive set of challenges. Artists who decide to start families while pursuing their careers must navigate the complexities of a nomadic lifestyle and the demands of their artistic pursuits. Additionally, ensuring the well-being and education of their children becomes a top priority. Recognising and addressing these unique circumstances is essential for finding effective solutions to support circus artists and their families as they lead itinerant lives.

2.1. "Parenthood in circus" by Magali Bancel

Circus as the ultimate place to raise your child. Circus as a physical place where, by tradition, life happens combining work and living. But also, circus as a certain mindset specific to the art form. That requires a pooling of efforts to guarantee the achievement of a trick, a performance, a project.

There already exist a lot of legal rules around parenthood, some more or less inclusive. But when it comes to the personal attitude towards it, where do we stand?

If we look past the physical aspect of maternity, I would like to look at parenthood in general.

I have, under my career as a circus artist, encountered too many times parents working in companies where being a parent isn't taken into consideration. "Your child, your responsibility". Parents spending almost all their salary just to be able to have their child on tour, parents leaving their children away for months unable to take them with them, parents breaking down in tiredness due to unadapted rehearsal/training schedule on tour. And sadly, parents feeling guilty for being parents.

The circus is, by tradition, a travelling art form and has, even in its new form, remained so. And even though the touring format has changed, the challenge around parenthood stays the same. How can you be a parent while away from your family?

If travelling around the world taught me one thing, it is that norms around parenting are looking very different from culture to culture. From countries where sleeping with your child until seven years old is normal to others where I was told to let my child cry to sleep.

Inclusivity, equality, diversity are surely some of the most important norms to be constantly worked on to improve life's quality and demand, among other things, accessibility.
Traditionally, circus as a lifestyle, travelling with circus tents and caravans offers a place where life is supported by everyone.

And as for now, when interviewing former circus colleagues, touring with circus tents and caravans still shows to be the most inclusive way for circus parents to work. It seems that the tradition of accepting family has a natural part of the project, yet it is actual.
When it comes to touring in other forms, norms are, in certain cases, changing.
Parenthood is valued, commonly agreed on and taken into high respect. Pregnancy, parental leave, and back-to-work are looked at without judgement.

Accessibility is a given fact. Costs such as travel support, nannies, etc. are a natural part of a budget. Adapted rehearsal schedules and accessibility for families to follow are some others.

When looking at a circus, I like to say that the Circus is a Family. Work and family as part of one same life project. A concept to be understood and embraced when choosing to work with a circus.

Magali Bancel is a French-Swedish circus artist as well as a circus director with over 25 years of experience in the field of performing arts. Currently artistic and development director of the circus department of the Riksteatern, the national touring theatre of Sweden, she is also the artistic director of the company Cirk L. From a young age, Magali founded the circus company Compagnie Isis

with her family. Her work has taken her around the world in various projects, including with Circus Cirkör, Compagnie Isis, Stockholm and Gothenburg Opera, Käfig Company, Östgötateatern, Norrköping Symphony Orchestra, etc.

2.2. Maternity leave

Maternity leave is a common form of social protection in many European countries, although the details and conditions can vary significantly from one country to another. In the European Union (EU), a directive known as Directive 92/85/EEC sets minimum standards for maternity leave. According to this directive, women working in EU member states are entitled to a minimum of 14 weeks of paid maternity leave.

However, it's important to note that the EU directive does not fully harmonise national regulations, allowing member countries some flexibility in setting their own rules regarding maternity leave. Therefore, specific details such as the exact duration of leave, the amount of remuneration, and eligibility requirements may differ from country to country.

In certain European countries, the duration of maternity leave far exceeds the minimum 14 weeks stipulated by the EU directive. For instance, Sweden offers maternity leave of up to 480 days, while Norway provides up to 49 weeks of paid leave.

The possibility for female artists to request maternity leave earlier may depend on the specific legislation of the country in which they work. It's crucial for female artists to inquire about the specific rights and benefits available to them concerning maternity leave in their country of residence or in the countries where they perform. Legal requirements can vary, and it's essential to be aware of your rights and ensure you receive the appropriate leave to safeguard your health and that of your child.

Some companies may also have their own internal policies or contractual agreements regarding maternity leave, so it's important to communicate with your employers to understand the options available to you.

In all cases, artists need to receive adequate support from their employers, colleagues, and those around them to facilitate a smooth transition to maternity leave and ensure their well-being during this significant period in their lives.

To obtain precise information about maternity leave regulations in a specific country, particularly within the European Union, it is advisable to contact the following organisations.

- **Local social security agencies**
  These agencies, often linked to the social security system or social insurance, can provide detailed information on maternity benefits and maternity leave rights. They are typically responsible for administering social benefits, including maternity leave.

- **Union organisations**
  Union organisations often actively advocate for workers' rights, including those related to maternity leave. They can offer information on your specific rights and entitlements as a worker, as well as guidance on how to claim these rights.

- **Information and legal assistance services**
  There are free or low-cost legal information services that can help you understand maternity leave regulations in a given country. These services may be provided by specialised law firms, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), or legal information centres.

- **Ministries of Labour or Labour and Social Affairs**
  In most countries, the Ministry of Labour or Labour and Social Affairs is responsible for labour and social protection policies, including maternity leave. You can visit their official website or contact them directly for specific information on maternity leave legislation.

It's essential to seek information from official and reliable sources in the relevant country, as regulations may change over time.

2.3. Paternity leave

Paternity leave is available in all member countries of the European Union (EU), but the specific details and conditions for its implementation can vary significantly from one country to another. While the EU does not impose uniform regulations for paternity leave, it has established certain minimum standards through directives.

The European Union Directive 2019/1158[1] aims to enhance work-life balance for parents and family caregivers. This directive, which came into effect in August 2019, mandates a paid paternity leave of 10 days for new fathers. This leave should be taken within four months following the child's birth or from the date of adoption. However, it's important to note that the EU directive sets a minimum of 10 days for paternity leave, and each member country has the freedom to establish more generous national rules if they choose to do so. As a result, some EU countries offer longer and better-paid paternity leave than the minimum standards outlined by the directive. For example, Sweden is known for its progressive parental leave policies, providing up to 480 days of leave, with a portion specifically reserved for fathers. Similarly, countries like Germany also offer relatively extended and well-paid paternity leave.

For artists, it's crucial to inquire with the relevant authorities in their country of residence to understand the specific paternity leave rights granted to them. Additionally, they can refer to their employment contracts, collective agreements, or artists' unions to obtain precise information regarding their rights concerning paternity leave.

Having the support of employers and those around them is essential to facilitate a smooth transition to paternity leave and ensure their well-being during this significant period in their lives.

As with maternity leave, it is advisable for artists to seek information from official and reliable sources in the respective country, as regulations may change over time. If there is any uncertainty, artists can reach out to the following organisations to obtain accurate information on paternity leave regulations:

- Local Social Security agencies
- Union Organisations
- Information and Legal Assistance Services
- Ministries of Labour or Labour and Social Affairs

By staying informed about their rights and benefits related to paternity leave in their country of residence or work, artists can better manage this important period of their family life while continuing their artistic careers.

2.4. Childcare, everyone's responsibilities

The primary responsibility for childcare lies with the parents or legal guardians of the child, and they are obliged to take the necessary steps to ensure their children's safety and supervision during performances.

However, artists, like any other parents, face unique challenges in finding childcare solutions, particularly due to their nomadic lifestyle. Depending on their circumstances, artists may have a limited range of options for childcare:

- **Family and friends:** Some artists may rely on trusted family members or close friends who can commit to accompanying them while travelling. This option may involve additional costs for transportation, accommodation, and meals.
- **Hiring a nanny or babysitter:** Hiring a professional nanny or babysitter is another possibility, but it can also incur additional expenses for the artist. Long-term hiring and meal costs are factors to consider.

1 European Union Directive 2019/1158 on work-life balance for parents and carers: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32019L1158&from=ES

- **On-site childcare:** Some arts organisations, festivals, or events may provide on-site childcare services. This could include a dedicated space staffed by early childhood professionals who care for the children while the artists perform.

- **Childcare exchange network:** Artists can collaborate and establish a childcare exchange network. In this system, parents take turns looking after each other's children during performances, allowing everyone to balance their professional and parental responsibilities.

The venue or festival that invited the company may also share some responsibility for general safety and accident prevention on the premises. This could involve implementing safety measures to prevent accidents, providing parents with clear information about safety policies and procedures, and ensuring a safe environment for the children present.

It's important to note that discrimination based on family status is prohibited by law. An organiser cannot prevent an artist from bringing their children. If an artist believes they are a victim of unjustified discrimination, they can consider seeking assistance from relevant authorities or organisations specialising in artists' rights.

Employers, such as the producers of a show, may have a role in ensuring the safety of children present in the workplace, especially when they are under the team's responsibility. This could include implementing safety measures, training staff to care for children, and creating protocols to address children's needs during performances.

There is no standardised legal framework governing the responsibilities of parents, companies, and hosting structures. Therefore, each parent should negotiate and reach agreements with their team and/or employer regarding the measures that can be implemented. Employers can also work with hosting structures to ensure these rules are applied, but these arrangements should be the result of negotiations involving all parties.

In summary, artists need to collaborate, communicate, and reach agreements with relevant stakeholders to address the unique challenges of childcare while pursuing a career in the travelling circus.

2.5. Access to education in Europe

European regulations regarding access to education are primarily determined by individual EU member states at the national level. However, there are European principles and instruments that promote educational access and protect fundamental rights. The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, which carries legal weight, acknowledges the right to education. It declares that education is a fundamental right open to all, regardless of their abilities.

In most EU countries, compulsory education typically begins between the ages of 5 and 6 and continues until the ages of 15 to 18. It's important to note that mandatory education doesn't necessarily mean that students must attend traditional full-time schools until the specified age. It can also encompass alternative forms of education, such as homeschooling, online learning, or other non-traditional approaches.

Regarding travelling circus teams with children and their education, there isn't specific European legislation or direct European legal precedent addressing this issue. The applicable laws generally depend on the country where the circus team is located and where the children typically reside. In most cases, the national laws of the country of residence will apply.

Circus organisations and associations can play a valuable role in negotiating and establishing agreements related to the education of children in these teams. Collaboration with relevant authorities and educational partners is essential in addressing the unique circumstances of travelling circus families.

It is recommended that individuals in these situations reach out to the Ministry of Education in their country of residence to understand the specific guidelines and possibilities for special arrangements. These may include options like distance learning, the appointment of a specific teacher for children in circus teams, or other measures tailored to their particular circumstances.

2.6. Funding

2.6.1. Funding for childcare

Here are some instances of financial support and aid available in Europe for artists and parents in the cultural sector to help with childcare.

- In **Belgium**, the Commission Community French (COCOF) offers the "Artistic Leave Fund" which offers financial assistance to artists for the care of their children during their periods of artistic activity.
- In **Finland**, the Taiteen edistämiskeskus offers grants and financial aid for artists, including childcare subsidies.
- In **France**, there is the "Child Care assistance for artist/authors" system offered by Agessa (Organisation for the management of social security for authors). It allows artists/authors to benefit from financial assistance for caring for their children under six years old when they carry out their artistic activity. There is also the Liberal Professions Fund (FONPEPS), which is intended to support artists and liberal professions in the context of their professional activity and can offer indirect financial assistance to artists who have young children.
- In **Italy**, the Fondo per la Tutela dei Diritti dei Lavoratori dello Spettacolo offers subsidies for workers in the entertainment sector, including financial aid for childcare.
- In **Germany**, the Künstlersozialkasse (KSK) offers financial assistance to self-employed artists, including childcare allowances. Artists can apply to this fund for financial support.
- In **Portugal**, the Instituto do Cinema e do Audiovisual offers specific aid for artists and professionals in the audiovisual sector, which may also include aid for childcare.
- In **Spain**, the Instituto Nacional de las Artes Escénicas y de la Música (INAEM) offers specific grants for performing arts artists, which can also cover childcare costs.
- In **Sweden**, the Sveriges Konstnärsförbund is an organisation that represents and defends the rights of artists in Sweden and offers subsidies for artists and parents who work in the cultural sector to financially support them in the care of their children.
- In **The Netherlands**, there is the Stichting Muziek en Theater Bureau Nederland which offers grants and loans to artists in the music and theatre sector, including support for childcare.
- In the **United Kingdom**, the Arts Council England offers the programme "Support for Childcare Costs" which provides financial assistance to artists and parents working in the cultural sector to cover childcare costs.

These examples are not exhaustive, and the possibilities for subsidies or specific aid may vary from one country to another. It is recommended that artists contact cultural organisations, artists' unions or government agencies in their country, to find out about available financial assistance programs.

2.6.2. Funding for education

In the case of schooling in the city where the big top is located, it's important to understand that schools have an obligation to welcome all children, including those from travelling teams, and provide them with a quality education. Children have the right to education, and schools are required to respect this right. Public education is typically free, meaning that children of travelling teams can attend public schools without additional tuition fees. However, it's worth noting that some private schools, depending on parental choice, may charge additional tuition fees. The hosting structure in the area can serve as a liaison for parents searching for a suitable school. Generally, the hosting structure can and should act as the local point of contact for the travelling team.

If a teacher is hired to educate children from travelling teams, they generally need to be recognised by the Ministry of Education in the child's country of residence. It's advisable to contact local educational services or the academic inspectorate to obtain precise information on the criteria and requirements for teachers working with children from travelling teams in your region. Therefore, referring to national legislation and contacting the relevant education authorities in the concerned country is crucial to getting precise information on the criteria and requirements for teachers working with such children.

The specific costs can vary significantly from country to country, and depend on individual circumstances. It's recommended to contact the relevant educational authorities and social services in the concerned country to obtain precise information on costs and potential financial assistance available in this context. At a minimum, expected costs include the teacher's salary, transportation, accommodation, meals, and educational materials.

Additionally, it's worth considering that some financial aid may be available to support the education of children from travelling teams, such as family allowances, housing assistance, or other social benefits. These forms of support can help reduce the costs associated with education.

Furthermore, in some countries, public authorities may provide financial support for out-of-school education. However, it's important to note that policies and practices may vary from country to country. Here are some examples of countries where public authorities can provide financial support for education outside traditional schools.

- **France**

In France, systems like family education (IEF) or non-contract school status allow families to provide education for their children outside conventional schools. Funding may be granted to families under these schemes, subject to certain conditions.

- **Germany**

In Germany, homeschooling is generally subject to restrictions, but there are exceptions for families residing in remote areas or with specific reasons for choosing this teaching method. In some cases, local authorities can provide financial support for the purchase of educational materials.

- **Norway**

In Norway, homeschooling is allowed but subject to strict regulations. Families who choose this method may receive financial assistance for homeschooling expenses.

- **Sweden**

n Sweden, homeschooling is permitted under specific conditions, and families can receive a state subsidy to cover education costs outside traditional schools.

It's important to note that, in general, to benefit from funding for alternative schooling, the child must exclusively receive education outside a formal school establishment; they cannot be simultaneously educated in a conventional school.

In addition to the two most common cases mentioned here, other alternatives are available for accessing education.

2.7. Useful contacts

If you are organising a tour within the European Union and have concerns about the schooling of children who accompany you while travelling, you can seek support from specialised European associations that promote access to education and schooling for such children. These organisations can provide valuable assistance and guidance to ensure that the educational needs of travelling children are met during the tour.

- **European Network for Traveller Education (ENTE)**

ENTE is a European organisation dedicated to enhancing the education of children from travelling families, including those in circus teams. Their mission involves facilitating the sharing of effective educational methods, offering

guidance, and valuable resources to educators, as well as providing support to families facing educational challenges while on the move
https://ente.education

- **International Federation for Home Economics (IFHE)**

IFHE is a global organisation focused on promoting home economics education and improving families' well-being. It's possible that IFHE has resources and initiatives related to the education of travelling children, including those in circus teams. Their work may encompass areas that intersect with the educational needs of such children and their families.
https://www.ifhe.org

2.8. Recommendations

Aside from the occasional financial assistance available depending on your country of residence, there isn't a well-established framework for the care and education of children travelling with a circus. Here are some suggestions for circus teams touring with children.

- **Communication with schools**

If your child is enrolled in a school and you plan to take them on tour with you, it's essential to communicate your project to their teacher or school principal as early as possible. Establish a connection between the teachers involved to ensure a smooth transition.

- **Consistency in teaching**

Whenever feasible, try to have the same person provide teaching for your child throughout the tour. Consistency can be beneficial for your child's education.

- **Seek guidance**

Many others have faced similar challenges before you. Don't hesitate to reach out to other travelling teams to learn about their experiences and solutions.

- **Research support systems**

Start researching support systems, childcare options, and schooling models that might work for your situation as early as possible. This preparation can make the process smoother.

- **Financial planning**

Be sure to plan for the additional costs associated with having a teacher or caregiver join you on tour. This might include expenses for transportation, accommodation, meals, and salaries. Explore available financial assistance programs to help cover these costs.

- **Team Collaboration**

Engage in open discussions with your team members and establish a protocol to share the mental and logistical load of caring for children while on tour. Teamwork can make a significant difference.

- **Festival Childcare**

When participating in a festival, consider organising a childcare system for your collaborators, artists, and the audience. This thoughtful gesture can be appreciated by all involved.

Remember that while there may not be a one-size-fits-all solution, careful planning, communication, and collaboration can help you navigate the unique challenges of combining a travelling lifestyle with children's care and education.

3 DISABILITY



By ensuring that big tops are accessible to individuals with disabilities, including artists, technical teams, administrators, and audiences, we contribute to promoting inclusion and equal access for everyone, regardless of their abilities. In this section, we will share the experience of the UK company Extraordinary Bodies regarding big tops and then examine the regulations established within the European Union.

3.1. "Extraordinary Bodies under the big top" by Geraldine Giddings

In Spring 2021, as COVID-19 restrictions on social interactions began to be lifted, Extraordinary Bodies hired a big top for a trial period of 3 weeks. The idea of a closed theatre space felt difficult, and we wondered whether the future of Extraordinary Bodies shows lay in tented touring, with us in control of our own venue.

Inside the tent we made a new show, Human. We staged a cabaret for an invited audience, testing out our COVID-19 safety measures. We invited freelancers in to meet and talk about the future of the industry, and, crucially, we asked everybody that came to the tent for their feedback. We also commissioned a specific investigation into access in a big top setting[1].

We found that creating accessible work need not be more or less difficult inside a tent than in another location. We learnt that with enough time, thought, planning and open-mindedness, a big top can be anything you want it to be. It is possible to create an environment that is comfortable and accessible to a diverse company of artists, crew and audiences.

If you are about to commission a new touring venue, then you have the opportunity to do something very exciting and ground-breaking. The recommendations that follow were a few things we learnt that you might find useful to consider, but above all, we would recommend that if you want your big top tent to be accessible to everybody, then it is vitally important to talk to and work with your users - artists, crews, and audiences - at the design stage. Take time and space to test things out.

Recommendations for an accessible big top tent

- Attitudes of the people in the team are crucial. Deaf/disability awareness training should be provided for all staff on tour and available to staff in the receiving venues/sites.
- Marketing assets for the venue should include information on how to get to the site and what support is available there, whilst assets for the show could include sign language and audio description, as well as a Visual Story for the show and the opportunity for a Touch Tour onstage before a show for blind/visually impaired audience members.

Outside the tent

- Floor and outdoor surfaces should be even from the point where audiences arrive, not just around the tent. Access to toilets, concessions, and other facilities should be level and easily discernible.
- Structural elements such as guy ropes, stakes, poles, and scaffolding should be a different colour, marked out or lit.
- Pathways, entrances, exits, and other key navigational points should be clearly marked with colour, lighting, and signage/setting to enable people to independently navigate the space.
- An Access Station is recommended to provide information on access support available.

1 Michael Achtman, Access Consultant, created an accessibility report by consulting artists and audiences for Extraordinary Bodies. This report is not publicly available. Those who wish to consult it can contact Extraordinary Bodies.

Inside the tent

- A choice of seating options could be available for audiences in the tent, including bean bags/cushions, wheelchair spaces at different heights, viewing platforms, designated areas for people with low vision, and seats with good visibility to the sign language interpretation/captions.

- A separate chillout space to welcome people who need a break from the stimulation of the performance onstage.

- Backstage, there should be level access to lighting, sound and video controls and rigging. Ensure lighting grids and rigging points can be lowered. There should be lifts as well as ramps to the stage. Tactile edging such as ropes or light strips around ramps, stairs and areas of the stage help with positioning and orientation for blind and visually impaired performers and crew.

Ultimately, we decided that tented touring was not right for Extraordinary Bodies, but we would be happy to discuss our findings with anyone interested in taking their own steps in this direction.

Geraldine Giddings is the Executive Director of Cirque Bijou, a UK-based company making shows for public and private clients and events since 1999, from rock'n'roll stadium tours with Muse to a section of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Pageant parade and regular festival finales and civic spectacles. She has worked with Cirque Bijou since 2006 and has been part of Extraordinary Bodies' leadership team for 10 years.

Extraordinary Bodies is our company of D/deaf, disabled and non-disabled artists working together to make circus for everybody. It is a collaboration between two UK organisations, showmakers Cirque Bijou and arts and equality champions Diverse City. We have been working together since 2012, making shows that engage diverse audiences, primarily in the outdoors until 2021 when we began making indoor work too. We want our shows to reflect the diversity of our communities onstage, backstage and in the audience. We made and toured a new circus theatre musical, Waldo's Circus of Magic and Terror in January-June 2023.

3.2. Standards within the European Union

Accessibility for individuals with disabilities in big tops across Europe is regulated by a combination of national and EU-level regulations and standards. EU member states are obligated to implement measures that ensure accessibility for people with disabilities in public places, including mobile structures like big tops.

Here are some of the regulations and standards that may apply to ensure accessibility for people with disabilities in big tops:

- **The European Accessibility Act**
This directive is designed to enhance the accessibility of goods and services for individuals with disabilities throughout the EU. It establishes minimum accessibility requirements for public spaces, which encompass temporary structures like big tops [2].

- **National standards**
Each EU member state may have its own set of national regulations and standards regarding the accessibility of public places, including big tops. These standards could include specific guidelines for features such as access ramps, wheelchair-accessible restrooms, elevators, appropriate signage, and more.

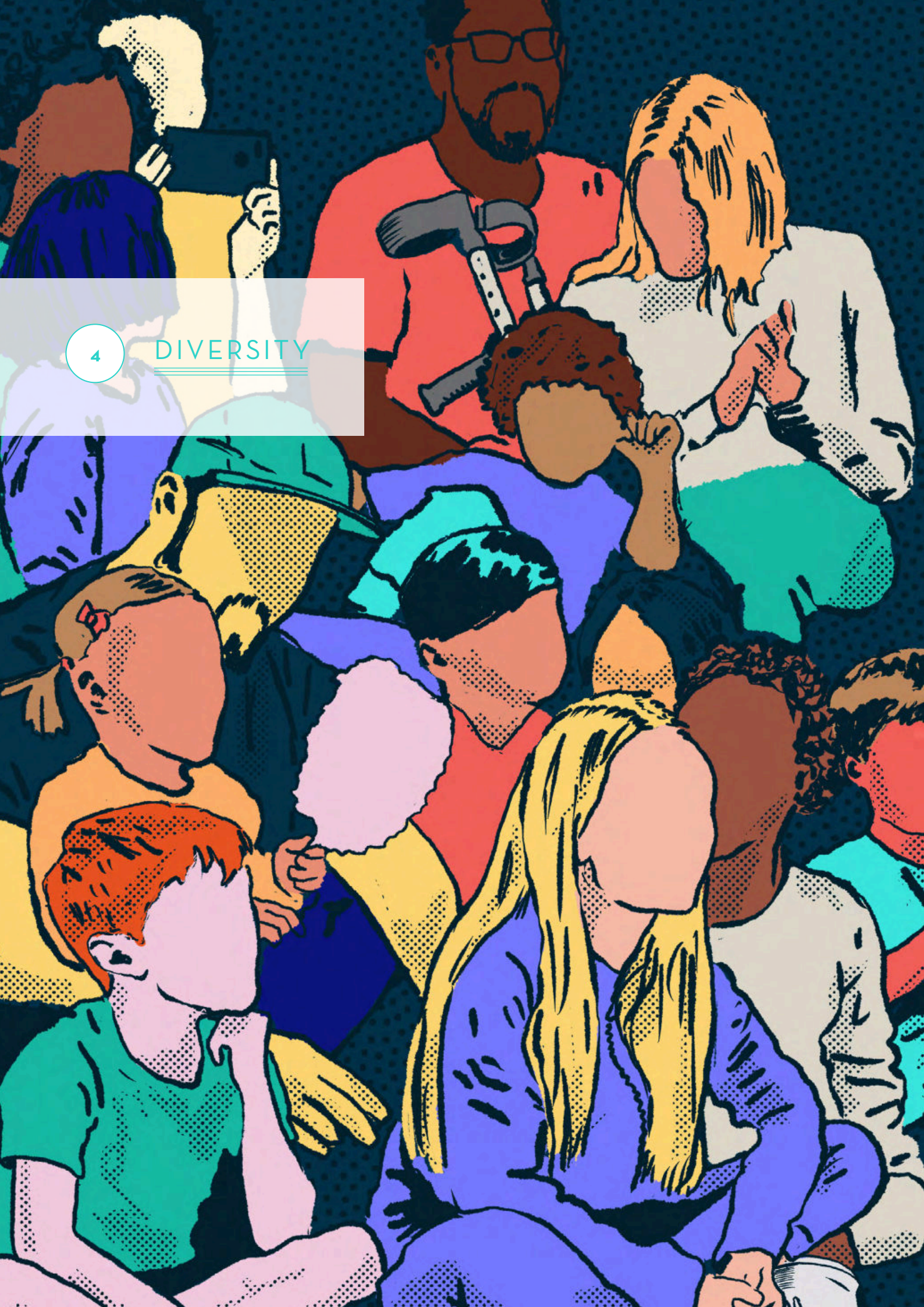
2 European Accessibility Act: https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1202

- **European Standard EN 13814**

Amusement parks and similar installations Although primarily intended for amusement parks, this European standard may also be relevant to big tops hosting shows or similar events. It outlines requirements related to the accessibility of facilities for individuals with disabilities.

It's important to note that the specific accessibility requirements can vary from one country to another. Therefore, it's advisable to consult the precise regulations and standards applicable in the country where you plan to set up the big top.

When you are in the process of planning and designing a big top, it's crucial to take into account the accessibility needs of individuals with disabilities. This may entail installing features like access ramps, wheelchair-accessible restrooms, designated seating areas for people with disabilities, and appropriately marked signage. Additionally, staff should be trained in best practices for welcoming and assisting individuals with disabilities.



4 DIVERSITY

Big tops should be regarded as inclusive spaces that celebrate diversity, encompassing both artists and audiences. As cultural hubs, they should be open and welcoming to a wide array of perspectives, artistic expressions, and identities. Recognising the intrinsic value of diversity, big tops can evolve into vibrant intersections where differences are not only accepted but also celebrated. This commitment to diversity fosters cross-cultural exchange and mutual understanding.

By nurturing an environment that is inclusive and respectful, big tops can genuinely transform into spaces for convergence, creativity, and communal experiences that are accessible to all. We have consulted with two experts for their insights on this vital matter.

4.1. "Celebrating diversity: nurturing inclusivity under the big top" by Bichu Tesfamariam

In the world of circus arts, big tops have always been a source of wonder and inspiration. As the artistic director of an Ethiopian/UK circus company, I find myself pondering an essential question - do big tops genuinely reflect the diversity of our society? In this article, I delve into the potential for inclusivity within big tops and explore the challenges that need to be addressed to create a more diverse and welcoming circus community.

Representing society's vibrant tapestry

As a circus company, we believe in representing the rich tapestry of humanity within our big top. Our performances are a celebration of the diversity that surrounds us, embracing various backgrounds, ethnicities, and experiences of both artists and audiences. However, there remains room for improvement, as I aspire to see even more faces from the global majority in big tops.

Fostering a culture of inclusivity

We strive to create a circus experience that is an inclusive space, uniting artists and audiences through shared wonder. The enchantment of our circus acts creates a unique platform for fostering a sense of belonging and connection. Every member of our audience should feel welcome and part of something extraordinary.

To achieve inclusivity within big tops, we embrace deliberate efforts to break down barriers:

- We encourage open dialogues between artists and programmers, programmers and audiences, and audiences and artists, allowing for diverse artistic styles and expressions to thrive.
- Ensuring physical accessibility for all, making our big top welcoming to everyone irrespective of their (dis) ability.
- Nurturing a culture of open dialogue and acceptance, valuing the importance of creating a safe space for artists and audiences of all backgrounds.
- Give a more open access to work opportunities for all artists: whether it's making it easier for artists to get their visas for a big tour or making sure that the kids from the local youth club have the same opportunity to attend an audition as anyone else.
- Break down biases in the industry: racism is insidious, and even the best-meaning people can have a bias against people who belong to communities outside their own. As an industry that prides itself in being forward-thinking, we can do better, and we need to be open about this very human trait that can prevent talented people from getting the opportunities they deserve.

Overcoming challenges on the path to inclusivity

We understand that the journey towards inclusivity is not without its challenges. We actively confront structural and systemic barriers that may hinder representation, making a conscious effort to provide equitable opportunities for aspiring artists from diverse backgrounds. Positive change can only be achieved through collaborative efforts. Our circus community engages with underrepresented communities and amplifies diverse voices, allowing for a more inclusive circus experience.

A journey towards a more inclusive future

As a circus company, we continuously assess our representation, break down barriers, and embrace diverse perspectives to authentically reflect the dynamic world we live in. We encourage everyone to do the same. Diversity is not a box-ticking exercise for a funding application. It is a core aspect of our shared experience living together on the same planet.

As we unite on this journey, the magic of the big top extends its embrace to all, creating a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive future for circus arts. With determination and dedication, we stand as a beacon of inclusivity, fostering a thriving circus community that cherishes and celebrates the beauty of diversity.

TOP TIP: "WHAT IS STOPPING US FROM BEING FULLY REPRESENTATIVE SECTORS?" BY VICKI AMEDUME

In June 2020, Circostrada and XTRAX collaborated to host CS LAB#5. Initially planned as a three-day residential laboratory, the event swiftly adapted to the challenges posed by Covid-19, prompting a rapid restructuring of its format and content.

UK Circus director Vicki Amedume delivered an inspiring keynote speech titled "What is stopping us from being fully representative sectors?" In her address, she contemplated ways to foster inclusivity within the circus industry and offered valuable insights and top tips on enhancing diversity.

Read Vicki's keynote: https://www.circostrada.org/en/ressources/cs-lab5-leadership-times-crisis

Bichu Tesfamariam is one of the co-founders of Circus Abyssinia.

Circus Abyssinia is a circus troupe from Ethiopia founded by Bibi and Bichu Tesfamariam. With a captivating blend of traditional Ethiopian culture and contemporary circus arts, their performances showcase astonishing acts, colourful costumes, and catchy rhythms. The troupe's boundless talent and authentic representation of Ethiopian heritage have earned them global recognition and admiration.

4.2. "The queer potential in big tops" by Tai-Jung Yu

Talking about queerness in circus and big tops, we usually think of their kinship with cabaret or drag performances. In this short text, I explore a different pathway and try to answer how the concept of queer may inspire the circus in big tops.

Whether focusing on what is within the circus tent nowadays or approaching from a historical point of view, circus seems to constantly challenge and be against what the public is used to: the quotidian boundaries of convention and limitation. Both corporeally and aesthetically, the content of circus gives the impression of being "out of this world". Architecturally, circus tent also provides a hint of space on the margins even away from society. Appropriating David Halperin's definition of queer, if circus is "at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant", spatially, culturally and content-wise, it seems like circus in big tops is inherently queer. But is it?

When talking about the opposite of normal in circus, I can't help but think of the freak show and human menagerie in the history of the touring big tops. Their realisation requires the curiosity of human nature but also resource exploitation with the method of separation. Not just the separation of circus from the society, but also the separation within the circus. The exhibitions of freaks and other "wonders" were placed in the sideshow annexe, away from the main big top. If there is anything queer about it, it would only be the very superficial layer of content and couldn't be more different from our understanding of the idea nowadays. What about juggling and acrobatics after the traditional circus? Don't they keep challenging the dominant way we use our bodies, thus making them queer? Here, I agree with the assertion of circus scholar John-Paul Zaccarini: the pursuit of walking with hands or skillfully manipulating objects may be driven by similar ideas of queerness, as looking for something "at odds with the normal". Nonetheless, it aims for normativity with able bodies, which means the acts of circus in the mainstream are "cosy craft, not edging art", subsequently, the queerness fades with every successful trick.

Dealing with queerness in the circus field, I contemplate not only how to do circus about queer, or simply combining forms like drag shows, but also, and probably more, about how to do circus in big tops in a queer way. On one hand, doing circus in a queer way implies a reconsideration of the queerness of techniques and bodies, like what Zaccarini points out. This idea reminds me of the "unjugglability" proposed by Phia Ménard, whose practices are deeply interwoven with the philosophy of queer, gender, juggling and materiality. Apart from the economic and practical factors mentioned in the guide, the advantage of doing performances in circus tents is that it is also a "historical site" which bears many stereotypes, cliché even injustices of the circus world. This provides an abundant context to dialogue with when one performs in tents. Meanwhile, the tent is not a void detached from our world. From the people performing and working there to the materials involved in its erection and staging, the various beings we meet while entering the tent are all from the same world we think we leave behind. Due to the conventional mindset of going to big tops, this fact is something the audience usually omits but can be well adopted by the artists who wish to create circus queerly in the tents. Considering the oppression from the past of the circus and the world now, there is more potential than we think when it comes to exposing structures and relations with(in) the society in circus tents. Doing circus in a queer way can also entail how the vulnerable, gazed individuals look back, give consent, or make their situatedness visible.

During the early 20th century, the African American bands touring with circus in the sideshow disseminated blues and jazz music in the US, which led to the growth and transformation of the genres later. It proved that circus in big tops has the potential to bring new ideas around and use its popular, family-friendly characteristics to reach the public. I believe when dealing with topics like queer (and many others), circuses and big tops can be the ideal places for the politics and aesthetics informing each other, and the suitable spaces for potential provocation, celebration, reflection, and imagination towards a different yet possible future.

TOP TIP: EQUITY'S GUIDELINES FOR ENTERTAINMENT PROFESSIONALS WORKING WITH LGBT+ PERFORMERS

Equity, the UK trade union for performing arts and entertainment, published comprehensive guidelines designed for entertainment professionals collaborating with LGBT+ performers. While these guidelines weren't specifically tailored for the circus sector, we highly recommend reviewing them and adjusting them to suit your particular environment.

https://www.equity.org.uk/advice-and-support/casting-and-auditions/guidelines-for-entertainment-professionals-working-with-lgbtplus-performers

As an independent producer and dramaturge, **Tai-Jung Yu** is currently the vice president of the IATC Taiwan branch and the columnist of DUMAXI – Taiwanese Circus Media, for which he served as the chief editor. He was the international affairs manager and resident dramaturg of Formosa Circus Art (FOCA) and represented the company in the founding committee of Circus Asia Network (CAN). He curated and co-organized some of the crucial circus forums in Taiwan, including the 2018 Taiwan Contemporary Circus Forum and the 2019 Taiwan International Contemporary Circus Forum at The National Kaohsiung Centre for the Arts – Weiwuying. He has been invited as the facilitator of Artist Residency Project in Weiwuying Circus Platform 2019-2021. Yu graduated from the MA program in Contemporary Theatre, Dance, and Dramaturgy at Utrecht University in 2023.



IV

ADVICE FROM EXPERTS

In this section, we've tapped into the expertise of seasoned professionals, including artists, administrators, and programmers who have extensive experience working in big tops. Our aim is to enhance this guide with tangible examples and real-world insights, offering practical viewpoints and wisdom gained from their hands-on experiences.

The goal of this section is to provide a well-rounded resource by incorporating concrete advice and first-hand knowledge from the field. Thanks to the valuable contributions of these established professionals, you'll gain access to informed recommendations and insights derived from their experiences. These diverse perspectives will cover various aspects of working in a big top, shedding light on potential challenges, best practices, and tried-and-true strategies for success.

Whether you're an emerging artist, an expert administrator, or a programmer venturing into the captivating realm of big tops, this section will equip you with a treasure trove of invaluable information to deepen your understanding and enhance your craft.



1 ADVICE FOR ARTISTS

- **Surround yourself with professionals: at least one technical director and one administrator or producer.**
- **Invest in hiring an experienced production manager.**
- **Find out about the legislation for big tops in different countries. In Greece, initially, we were confronted with legislation for constructions: seismic resistance, archaeological excavations... and it's not a joke.**
- **The significance of having comfortable on-site accommodation cannot be overstated. During my initial year on tour, I naively believed I could make do with staying in someone else's truck or at a distant hotel, and the experience was far from pleasant. The hotel was invariably located too far from the performance site, and waking up on a chilly morning in a barn that had hosted a raucous party the night before was far from an ideal way to kickstart the day. By the end of the first six months on the road, I was physically and mentally drained.**
- **Before you go ahead and buy a big top, it's a smart move to chat with other circus folks, especially if you're thinking about designing a brand-new one. There are plenty of seasoned pros out there who've been down this road and faced all sorts of issues. You can pick their brains for tips and tricks to make your life easier.**
- **Loosen up all the gear before hitting the road (big tops, stands, tracks, heating, sound and lighting gear, convoys, and the works).**
- **Think about transport procedures (ban on double hitches in many countries, maximum length in Italy, etc.) and the cost of transport by boat.**
- **Come with warm, WATERPROOF clothes + a good breakfast.**
- **Surround yourself with a good administrative and technical team. This way you can concentrate 100% on creating art.**
- **Come with an extension cord and a power strip to set up your desk almost anywhere. Word from an all-terrain tour booker.**
- **The timelines for getting a project up and running can differ from one country to another. In France, we tend to start pretty early, and this can create challenges when dealing with assistance, especially for tour construction, both in France and abroad.**
- **The public is not always easy to get in, particularly because of the confusion with the traditional circus. In Greece, we performed 30 performances under a big top. The first week, there were around fifty people. In the end we were sold out in advance and had to add performances.**
- **Always keep in mind that a woman is just as capable of building a tent as any man.**
- **It's a good idea to keep a pack of beer and a bottle of juice in the back of the truck to treat the team to a drink at the end of a long day of assembly or dismantling.**
- **Be careful on the road and check your tires.**
- **Spend time with other companies that have big tops! You will learn a lot, you will understand if this is the direction you want to take, and you will also start to grow your network.**
- **Get in touch with other companies. They will help you more than any promoter or producer. The contemporary big top circus world is small, and we are all here to help and support each other!**
- **Don't buy bad trucks. They will be a source of stress, wasted time, and wasted money. It's worth investing in good vehicles.**

- **Be careful. It can be extremely dangerous to tour with a big big top. Respect your big top, and make sure you monitor the weather forecast for wind!**

- **When choosing your big top, it's essential to consider the specific requirements of your circus disciplines. Additionally, think ahead about the ground space required for setting up the big top, as it may not always fit within the premises. If your tour involves caravans, plan carefully for the type of campsite you want. Converting a part of the semi into a shower and laundry room can significantly improve the touring experience.**

- **When selecting a big top trailer, prioritise ease of assembly. Consider making improvements to it from the beginning and include sheltered storage spaces for heavy goods vehicles if feasible. These considerations can streamline your touring process.**

- **Choose the lightest exterior colour for the outside of your big top.!**

- **Have as many drivers as possible with Heavy Goods Vehicles licences in the team!**

- **During your first big top assembly or dismantling, it's wise to allocate extra time and personnel. Starting out, there might be unexpected challenges. With experience, the process becomes smoother and more efficient!**

- **If you don't have a skilled mechanic on your team, it's essential to have one in your network. Someone you can call for advice when a vehicle in your convoy starts acting up between tour dates. It's even better to allocate a small annual budget for their invaluable services.**

2

ADVICE FOR PRESENTING PARTNERS



- **Tips about working with promoters who've not presented a big top before: if the promoter normally works off-site (i.e. in a theatre), they may have different expectations and minimal experience/knowledge of the needs of how to deliver an 'off-site' production with all the necessary elements to make it a success for both the company and the audience.**
– Box office: they'll be used to having a computer system in their building. You'll need an on-site presence for last-minute ticket sales and people who've forgotten their tickets/can't find their email tickets, etc.
– Look and feel of the site: visual branding and signage within the landscape of the park/field/car park to connect to both the theatre, local people, and the company.
– Security: make sure costs are covered by the promoter and flagged up early on in the negotiation
– They will need to understand needs and supply of water, electricity, the collection of rubbish and brown water - Encourage them to include advance community involvement and introductions to key local people who can spread the word and be proud to 'host' in their town - selling a show that is off-site can be a challenge when audiences don't want to change their pattern - Invite them to a see the show and visit a site in advance with a team from different departments and bring 'audience ambassadors'

- **Ensure you have support from the public authority that owns the big top space; their assistance is crucial for permits, connections, and communicating with local residents.**

- **Prioritise setting up the camp and making the site lively.**

- **Consider longer setup times and collaborate with subsequent teams on any necessary adaptations.**

- **Keep programming big tops; it adds variety and excitement to the world.**

- **Provide a welcome big top for ticketing and the bar if it's not brought by the team.**

- **Be aware that in many countries, the traditional circus image is deeply ingrained, and it may take time to convince the public of something different.**

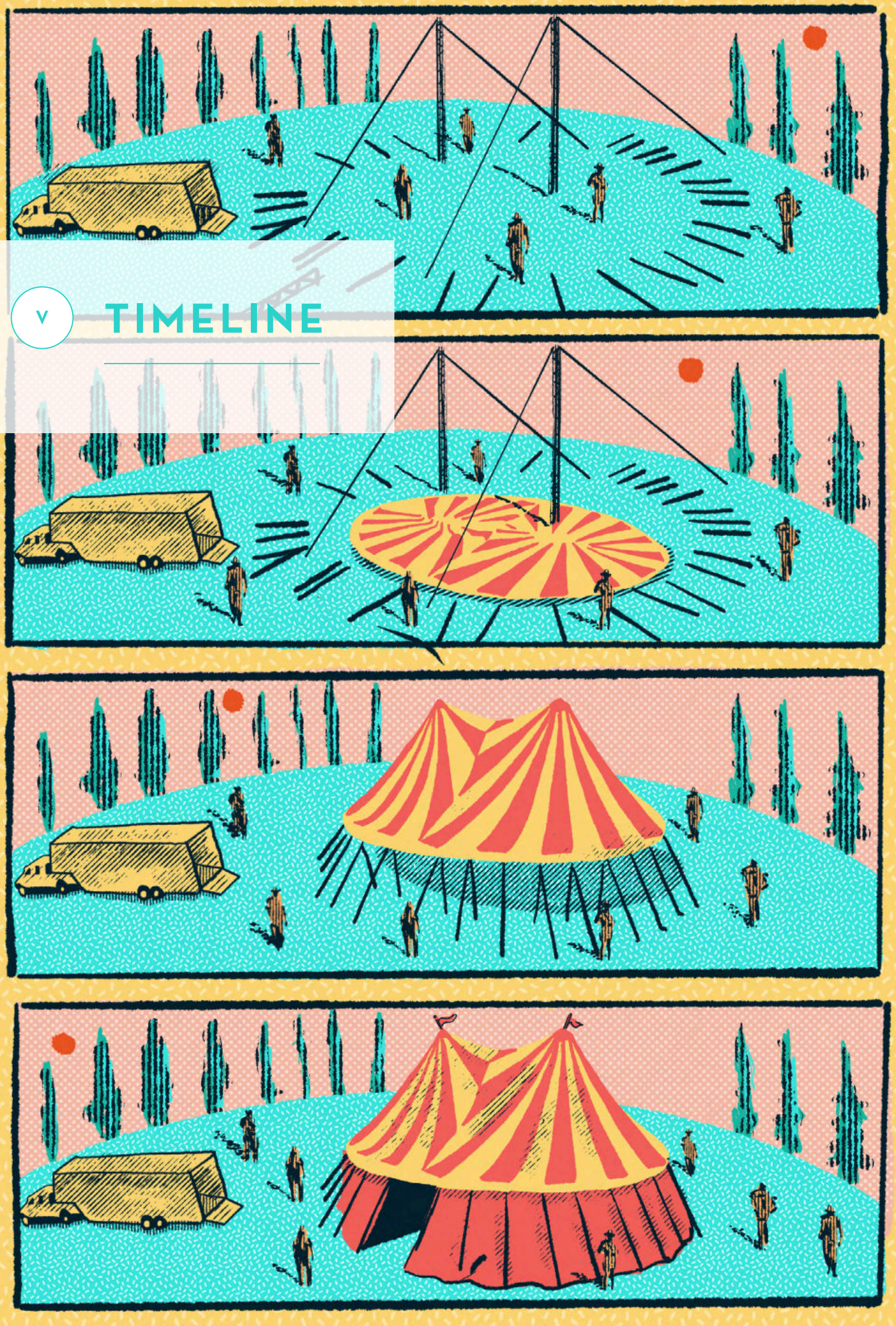
- **Find an ideal location with easy access to electricity and sanitary water.**

- **Seek a place with parking and special access for your convoy of artists and the audience.**

- **Be cautious of your budget; factor in heating oil and transportation costs, which can be substantial.**

- **Summer afternoon performances in a big top can be challenging due to rising temperatures. Aim for later time slots, ideally after 8 p.m.**

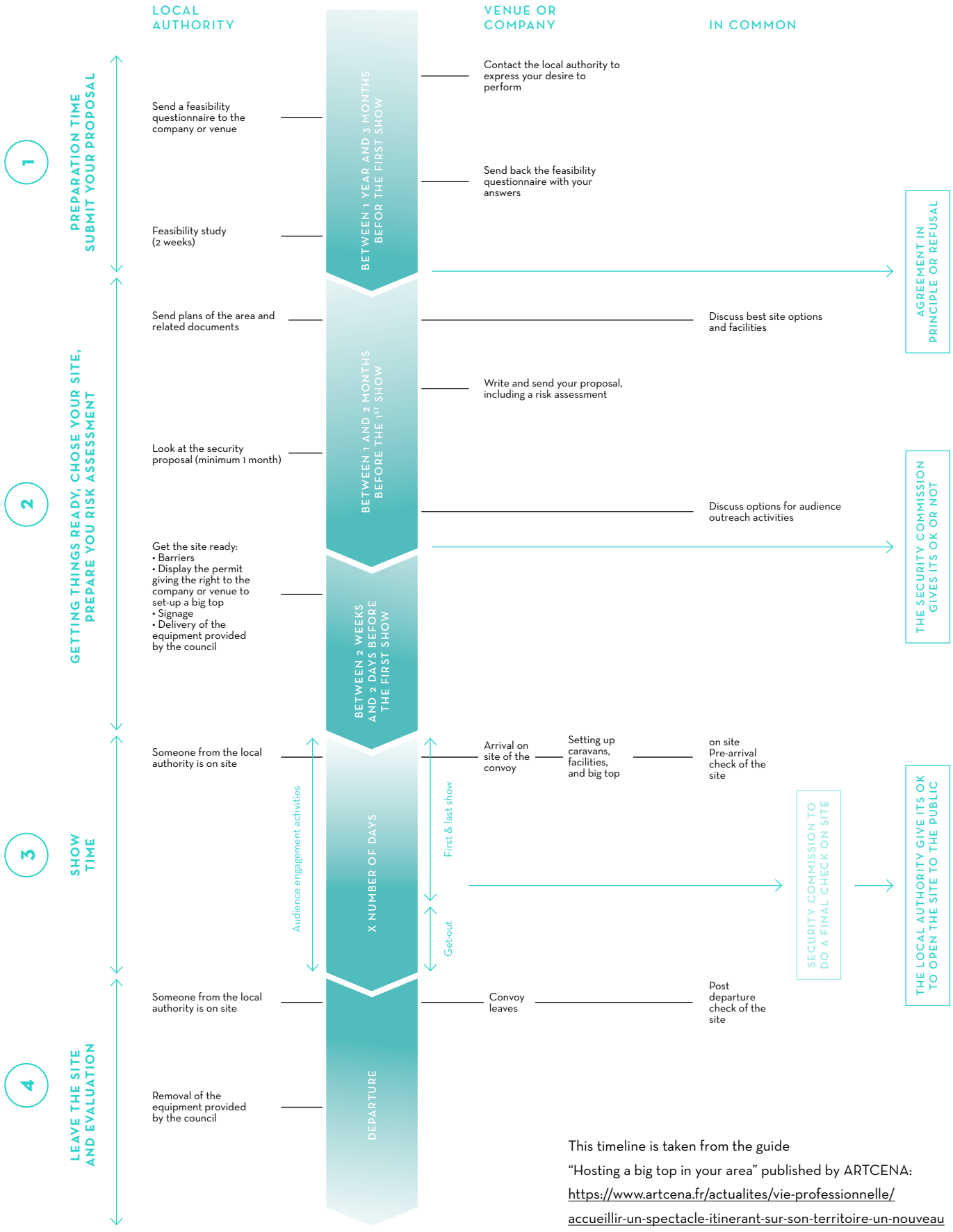
- **Always verify heavy goods vehicle access and the availability of electrical and evacuation networks at the site.**



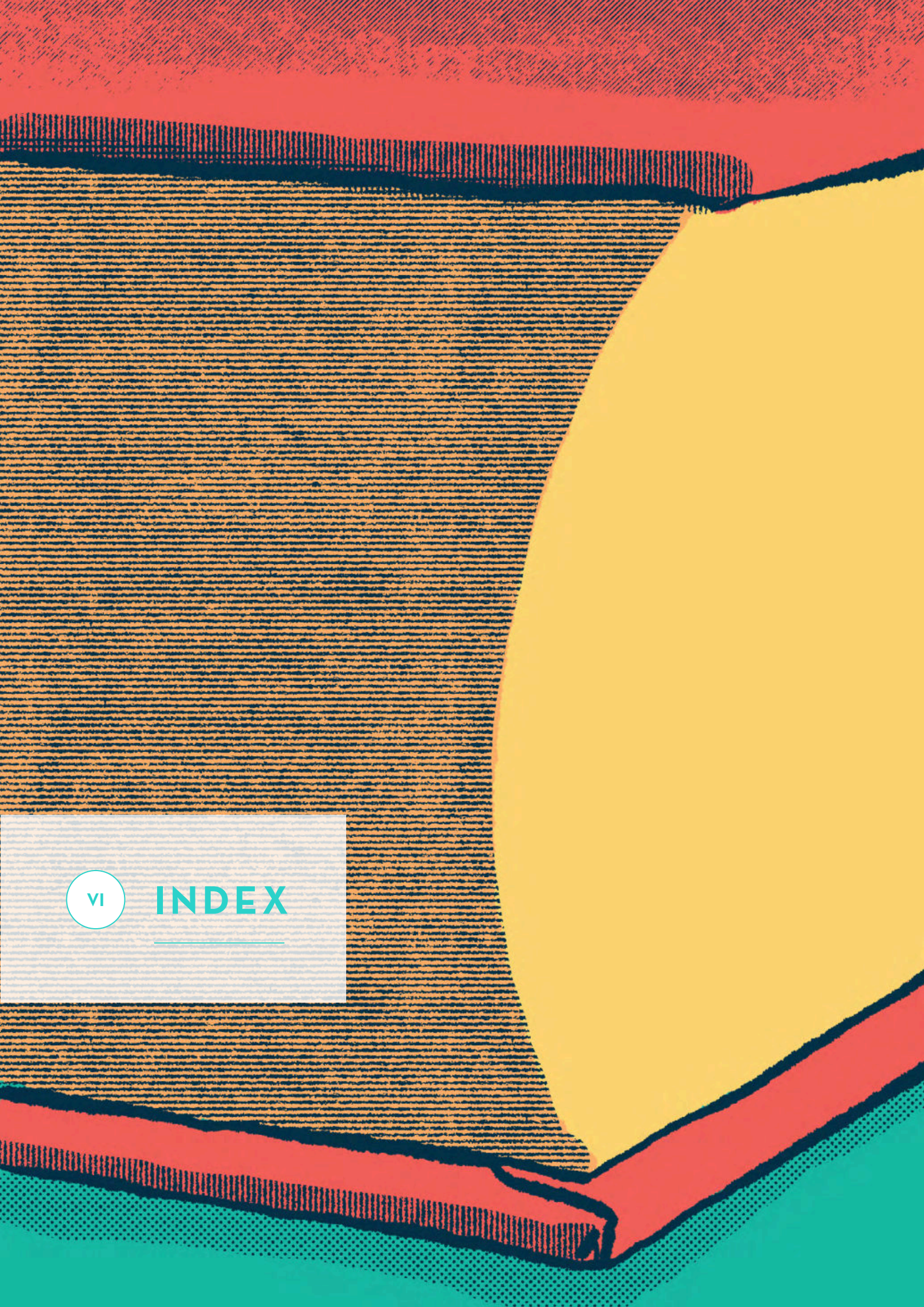
V

TIMELINE

PLANNING STAGES FOR SETTING UP A BIG TOP IN A TOWN



This timeline is taken from the guide
"Hosting a big top in your area" published by ARTCENA:
https://www.artcena.fr/actualites/vie-professionnelle/accueillir-un-spectacle-itinerant-sur-son-territoire-un-nouveau



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