



Keychange Pledge

“The Keychange Pledge has foregrounded the need for institutional change and provided a useful framework for advancing that end.”

The music industry has a gender problem. Women and gender expansive artists, creators and music professionals have been consistently under-represented across festival stages and line-ups, in board rooms, in studios, decision-making positions and on curriculums for far too long.

In 2017, the Keychange Pledge was launched as a call to action to challenge this imbalance, encouraging music festivals and conferences to publicly commit to programming 50% women artists and professionals in their line-ups and panels by 2022.

Responding to industry feedback asking that the pledge be made accessible throughout the entire music industry ecosystem, the Keychange movement evolved in 2018 to invite all music organisations and all industry actors to identify areas of their work in which they wanted to create lasting, representative change not just for women, but for all under-represented genders, and to commit to the Keychange Pledge in support of this.

More than 600 music festivals and organisations around the world have now taken the Keychange Pledge, implementing sustainable structures and practices to provide more space and more opportunities for women and gender expansive creators and professionals throughout the music industry than ever before. Each pledge is unique to the organisation making it, with areas of action, timeframes and targets identified by the pledge signatory at the time of joining the movement.

Diverse gender representation is key to creating a sustainable future for the music industry, and with greater diversity comes great success: the McKinsey study Diversity Wins (2020) outlines how “the most diverse companies are now more likely than ever to outperform less diverse peers on profitability”. And as music fans become more and more conscious of the gender imbalance on festival stages, radio playlists and beyond, data is showing that consumers are insisting upon change: a 2022 study by Keychange founding partner Reeperbahn Festival demonstrates that young music consumers regularly consider gender (in)equality when purchasing music offerings.

Significant progress has been made by Keychange Pledge signatories over the past 5 years proving that **targeted, positive action works**. But the music industry urgently needs to take further action to ensure that the barriers facing women and gender expansive people are removed. This movement isn't about closing doors, it's about opening doors to more talented thinkers and creators than ever before to inspire a diverse, representative and accessible industry for all.

Keychange: The Journey So Far

2017 - Keychange Pledge Launch - "50/50 by 2022"

Music festivals and conferences invited to take a pledge to achieve 50/50 representation across their stages by 2022

2018 - Pledge Expansion

All music organisations invited to pledge to achieve at least 50% representation of women and gender expansive people in one or more area(s) of their work, by 2022 or in a self-determined time frame.

2017

Launch of the Keychange Pledge "50/50 by 2022"

Music festivals and conferences invited to take a pledge to achieve 50/50 representation across their stages by 2022

2022

600+ Keychange Pledge Signatories

More than 600 music festivals, record labels, booking agencies, orchestras, organisations and beyond from around the world have taken the Keychange Pledge to join the movement for change.



2018

Pledge Expansion

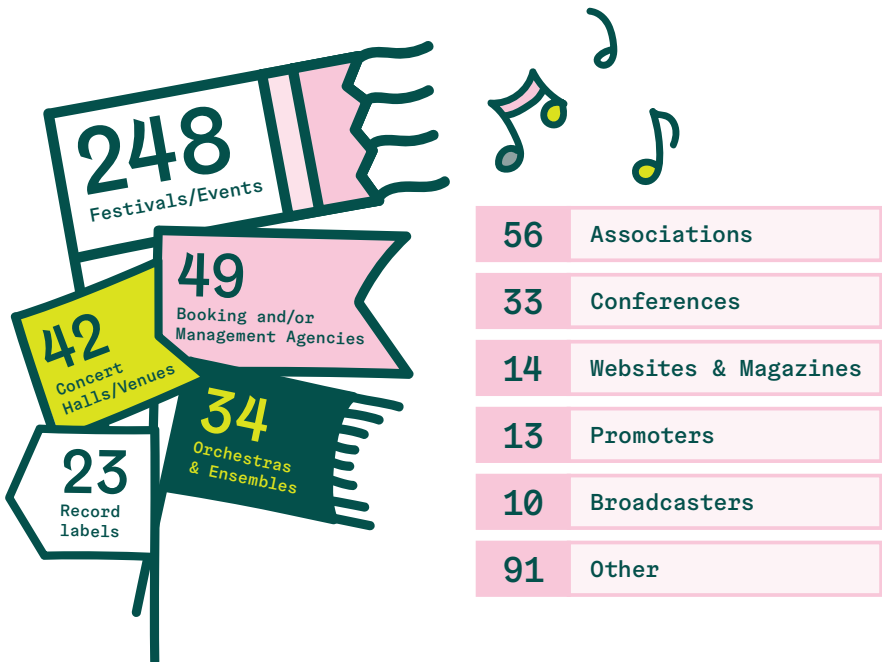
All music organisations invited to pledge to achieve at least 50% representation of women and gender expansive people in one or more area(s) of their work, by 2022 or in a self-determined time frame.

2021 - 64% of signatories already achieving or surpassing their pledge targets

More than 200 signatories from around the world shared data around their pledge progress for this report, demonstrating that by the end of 2021, 64% of reporting pledge signatories had already achieved or surpassed their pledge of at least 50% representation of women and gender expansive artists and professionals. Further signatories are working to self-defined timeframes (all within 5 years of signing the pledge) and making significant advances towards achieving their pledge targets.

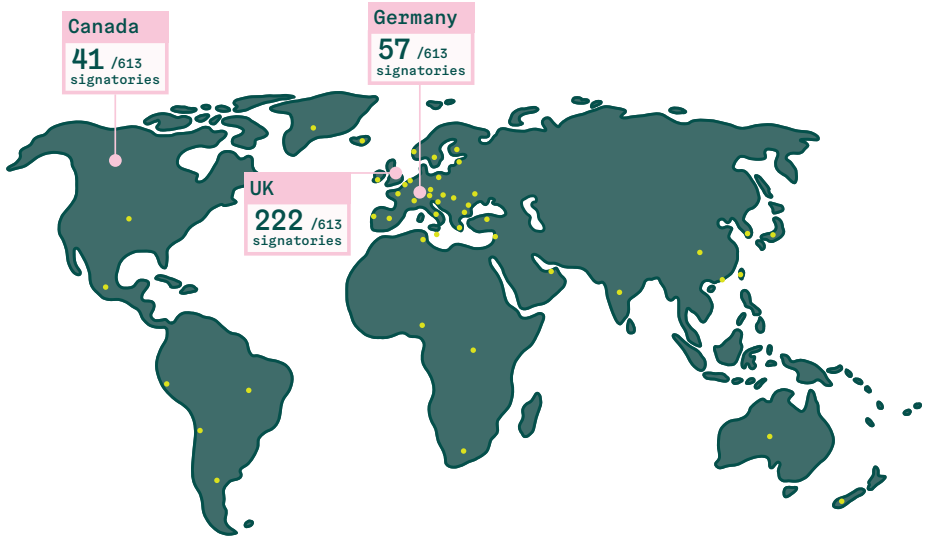


Keychange operates in every sector of the music industry: Change comes from within, but in order to create true, lasting equity, change needs to be actioned in every sector of the music industry. The Keychange Pledge signatory network includes members from all corners of the music industry, who are collectively working towards the same goal of equal representation. As of 2022, 40.5% of Keychange Pledge signatories are festivals, 9.1% are Associations (organisations, trade bodies), 8% are management and/or booking agencies and 6.9% represent concert halls and venues.



Keychange is a Global Movement: Gender inequity is a global issue which requires action on a global scale. The Keychange Pledge is open to signatories from all countries, and with 222 out of 613 signatories, the UK currently has the highest number of Keychange Pledge signatories. Germany follows with 57, and Canada with 41 signatories. Over 160 signatories have joined the movement in Keychange's further partner countries of Sweden, Estonia, Italy, Norway, Iceland, France, Spain, Poland and Ireland.

The Keychange movement is increasingly attracting engagement from around the world, with signatories from Australia, Chile, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Hong Kong, India, Lebanon, Nigeria and beyond now contributing to the international Keychange Pledge network, each taking individual actions to address gender inequity within their work.



"We use the Keychange Pledge now as a way of life in every aspect of the company whether it be events, recruitment, training."

Positive, Affirmative Action

Alongside the Keychange team, signatories have developed a wide variety of actions to work towards their gender representation goals, reflecting the wide range of organisations that have now signed the Keychange Pledge. These actions range from **raising awareness publicly** and within their teams, extending their **networks**, adjusting **booking and recruitment strategies**, to **monitoring** their line-ups and developing specific **programmes and projects** to increase diversity. Keychange supports signatories in these efforts by providing **guidelines and best practices**, as well as a clear framework to publicly share the pledge and its goals.

When joining the Keychange Pledge, music organisations are encouraged to consider and implement the following actions, as well as adding their own bespoke targets:

- **Festivals** can commit to booking at least 50% women and gender expansive artists in their line-ups
- **Conferences** and conventions can pledge to ensure that at least 50% of their keynote speakers, presenters and panellists are women and gender expansive.
- **Orchestras** can use the 50% target for composers commissioned and/or number of players, no. of principal players, balance of senior staff
- **Concert halls** can look at line-ups on stage or other aspects of their organisation eg. senior staff, technical staff
- **Conservatoires, universities and schools** can pledge towards 50% representation of women and gender expansive students, lecturers, senior staff teams, live music programmes, visiting musicians
- **Agents, publishers and labels** can consider the balance of artists they sign to their rosters
- **Charities and Trade Bodies** can consider the make-up of their Board and staff whilst pledging to encourage their members to sign up to Keychange as well
- **Broadcasters** can use the pledge to improve gender representation in their playlisting, guests invited onto shows, and station presenters
- **Publications** and those employing editorial staff can apply the Keychange Pledge when commissioning writers, editors, photographers etc.
- **Organisations with youth groups or education programmes** can apply the Keychange Pledge to staffing, recruitment, and content created for their students and participants.
- **Awards ceremonies** can commit to inviting 50% women and gender expansive members to their judging committees, equal representation within long-lists, and ensuring that selection criteria don't present barriers to the inclusion of women and gender expansive artists and professionals.

"We do regular checks of our lineups at points throughout the booking process now to see if we're on the right track or if we need to adjust our strategy for the next round of artist offers".

Targeted Action Works

Being involved in Keychange has absolutely had a positive effect, namely on our staff who all feel enthused to meet the pledge as part of our own internal gender equality agenda. We have created work that specifically engages women and gender minorities, largely through our Creative Engagement programme. Our partners have also given positive feedback about our gender equality agenda, particularly our funders, who have seen evidence of the strong representation in our programme.

EFG London Jazz Festival, Keychange Pledge Signatory

We actively communicate our Keychange Pledge towards our audience and partners. This undoubtedly has a positive impact on our positioning as a sustainable event.

Eurosonic Noorderslag, Keychange Pledge Signatory

To be the 500th signatory (since June 2021) of the Keychange gender pledge made it clear to the EBU radio organisations and the wider music world that we are actively part of the movement. It helps to communicate our engagement for a gender-balanced environment in the music industry. To be an official partner of Keychange enables us to raise the visibility of gender-related questions among our member organisations and can also be a good support when it comes to addressing gender questions with them and other music partners.

EBU Music - Keychange Pledge Signatory

"We are now more diligent in asking "Who is missing?" whenever we book a large number of artists, delegates or conference speakers."

Gender Inequity in the Music Industry

While Keychange Pledge signatories are taking huge strides forward in creating representative workforces, rosters and line-ups, women and gender expansive creators and professionals remain vastly under-represented throughout the music industry.

Less than 1% - The Jaguar Foundation report found that less than 1% of the top 200 airplay tracks of 12 UK radio stations were made by only women or non-binary musicians in 2020 - 2021.

2.8% - USC Annenberg Initiative's report by Dr. Stacy L. Smith, Inclusion In The Recording Studio? - Examining 1,000 Popular Songs From 2012 to 2022 found that of the songs examined, only 2.8% were created by women producers, only 12.8% of songwriters were women (average across all years), and only 13 out of 1,756 producing credits went to women of colour.

Below 10% - The Malisa Foundation, GEMA and Music S Women* conducted a study of 15 small, mid and large festivals between 2010 and 2019, and found that "on... festival stages, the participation of female musicians remains below 10% on average in the period studied. However, an overall increase in the proportion of women can be observed over time, from around 7% in 2010 to just over 12% in 2019." - Gender In Music - Charts, Works And Festival Stages

18% - EQUALLY found that when analysing the lineups of 38 Italian festivals in 2022, of 775 acts, 18% of solo artists were women, with only 5% of bands featuring at least one woman in their group.

26.9% - The female:pressure FACTS survey quantified the gender distribution of artists performing at electronic music festivals around the world, and in 2022 revealed that female acts represented 26.9% of line-ups in 2020-2021, and non-binary artists 1.3% in 2021.

31.9% - Across the 3 major labels (Universal Music UK, Sony Music UK and Warner Music UK), the mean pay gap in 2021 was 31.9%.

46.4% - Sexualised Violence in European Night Life Environments report: 46.4% of women and 30% of trans and non-binary gender identities reported having always or very often experienced some kind of "normalised" sexual violence when out at night, compared to 12.4% of men.

Alongside the industry-wide issues highlighted by these statistics, Keychange Pledge signatories were asked to share information about any challenges faced in achieving their pledge goals so far, in order to inform new areas of focus, support and next steps in the development of the Keychange Pledge.

- A barrier that multiple signatories highlighted was **a lack of support** from different sectors within the industry where partners didn't express, or share, similar goals.
- Some signatories also reported **difficulties in changing pre-existing rules**, and experiencing issues in team dynamics when it came to implementing new systems and structures to support increased representation.
- **COVID-19** proved challenging for all organisations in the music industry, but the lack of live events throughout 2020 and 2021 meant that many Keychange Pledge signatories were unable to produce festival editions, and therefore meet some of their pledge ambitions during those years. Many signatories did report, however, that the pandemic provided a moment of reflection and the possibility to change pre-existing practices within their organisations, leading them to be better equipped to return to live activity with improved gender representation across their teams and line-ups.

'Lack of support' and **'difficulties in changing pre-existing rules'** provide further proof that the whole of the music industry ecosystem needs to urgently work together in order to remove the multitude of systemic barriers facing creators and professionals due to their gender.

"We now have a specific target, and we now are much more openly celebratory about the achievement... representation is a key part of the programming process. Our programming policy openly states our ambitions for our artists to represent the current population and to set positive role models."

Keychange Pledge - Action Plan

“Our core values already have the weight of equality and minority gender representation, but this pledge will make our further and future steps more dedicated and well-formulated”

In response to the feedback received from Pledge signatories and addressing the significant diversity issues existing throughout the industry, Keychange has created a 4 point plan to encourage urgent, sustainable change throughout the music industry.

- **BEYOND GENDER:** Working towards gender balance within the music industry requires actions that represent women and gender expansive people from all under-represented backgrounds. This requires a strong focus on intersectionality when creating pledges and monitoring progress, ensuring representation of and direct input from women and gender expansive people of all races, ethnicities, (dis)abilities and social classes, throughout all of Keychange’s activities.
- **URGENT ACTION:** Encouraging the global music industry to create detailed, time-focussed, intersectional pledges to proactively bring about sector-wide change.
- **GLOBAL COMMUNITY:** Creating roundtables, workshops and conversation spaces for different sectors of the music industry to share best practices, information, and tips for development and progression.
- **EDUCATION & ACTIVISM:** Keychange already provides guidelines, best practices and monitoring support to individual signatories. To extend this offering in the future, Keychange will:
 - Work with partners and collaborators to create safer spaces and forums for activism
 - Offer further training and guidance in the use of appropriate diversity language and practices
 - Collaborate with and signpost organisations offering training and development in diversity and inclusion practices.

“It’s the responsibility of every single member of the music industry to insist upon and bring about urgent, progressive, lasting change. Keychange is proving that targeted action to break down the systemic and cultural barriers preventing women and gender expansive artists and professionals from entering and succeeding in the music industry is working - so now is the time to take this even further.

From music schools and conservatoires including more women and gender expansive composers in curriculums, to radio stations improving representation in playlisting and staffing, to collections societies and trade bodies increasing gender representation in their memberships, much needs to change - and now.

For this reason, we’re calling upon the entire global music community to join Keychange in taking urgent action towards a diverse, representative and sustainable music industry for all.”

- Francine Gorman, Keychange



**Join Keychange, and be part of
this vital movement for change.**

keychange.eu

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