



PRESS RELEASE

THE EUROPEAN ARENAS ASSOCIATION APPOINTS ROCKHAL'S CEO OLIVIER TOTH AS NEW PRESIDENT

For Immediate Release: The Netherlands, September 27, 2021.

The European Arenas Association has elected Olivier Toth, CEO Rockhal Luxembourg, as President succeeding AEG Europe's John Langford who is stepping down after completing his two-year tenure. Rockhal is one of Luxembourg's leading entertainment venues hosting a wide range of international and regional artists. The venue is based in Esch-sur-Alzette and has a capacity of 6,500 people.

"I can think of no better person to lead the EAA. Since joining the association, Olivier has been working tirelessly on behalf of the members to deliver the association's goal of strengthening ties with the European Union and boosting the advocacy impact of the EAA at EU level" said outgoing President, John Langford.

Olivier Toth, an EAA board member, was a co-founder of the EAA EU Subgroup which morphed into the Arena Resilience Alliance during the Covid-19 crisis when it became clear that the live event industry needed a unified voice through which to open dialogue with EU governing bodies. ARA has been active throughout the pandemic through a wide range of self-funded activities to raise awareness on the current crisis and has been in active conversations with top level national and European policy-makers, working towards the development of a uniform regulatory framework for the mandatory requirements and measures that will bring back live events across Europe.

In addition to the work being done by ARA, Toth was instrumental in the reshaping of the EAA's vision for the future designed to create a more inclusive membership structure and to address the challenges and opportunities for recovery and long-term growth. The association's activities will centre on four pillars:

- knowledge exchange, education and training
- advocacy
- networking
- content development

Commenting on his appointment Olivier Toth said;

"I am honoured to be appointed as the EAA's next president and look forward to further developing and delivering the EAA's realigned objectives and to continue to work closely with the EU on arena-related topics. Through the Arena Resilience Alliance, we have seen how arenas play a vital role as the hub of the live events ecosystem and how necessary it is to have a collective voice for our industry. I think we can all agree the world

we are returning to is not the same one we left behind and I am confident that the EAA and its ARA subgroup will work towards building a stronger and more unified European live events sector .”

Commenting on the EAA’s realigned objectives, EAA Board Member and Chairman of the Board at Arena Riga, Girts Krastins said:

“2020 and 2021 clearly show that well established pan-European institutions are the ones whose voice counts and that they can serve as a united platform for raising awareness of our industry and people. This period has been a turning point for the EAA as it initiated the re-evaluation of the organisation’s objectives and ambitions. As a result, the EAA has marked a clear path ahead through its “Four Pillar” strategy to maintain and strengthen its position in Europe and the event industry.”

EAA Board Member and CEO Got Event AB, Lotta Nibell said:

“The challenges we all have faced during Covid, shows the importance of both sharing and building knowledge of our industry. Arenas function as a catalyst for the local and national tourism industry but decision-makers very often lack insights on our ecosystem. The EAA provides a solid platform, where we can both generate knowledge and together create a strong voice so we can start to rebuild and expand.”

Adrian Doyle, EAA Board Member and Director of Xperience Operations at the Odyssey Trust, Belfast also commented:

“The Covid crisis made us realise very quickly that the live event community needed to get organised in terms of speaking to elected officials at both national and EU levels. The position of arenas as the hub of the live ecosystem put us in a perfect position to speak on behalf of the wider community and to start to build a lasting advocacy structure.”

EAA Board Member and CEO Altice Arena, Jorge Vinha da Silva added:

“We need to work even harder on creating new and innovative content and to meeting the expectations of a new generation of fans and visitors. We will continue to share ideas, know-how and creativity to ensure the cultural well-being of all our stakeholders.”

For further information:

[Access EAA Prospectus here \(1\)](#)

[http://www.europeanarenas.com/news/\(2\)](http://www.europeanarenas.com/news/(2))

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Notes to editors:

About the EAA:

- The EAA represents 34 arenas in 20 European countries that operate some of the world’s most cutting-edge venues, hosting unrivalled programs with outstanding artists, productions, sports and corporate events. The association’s member arenas host over 2,900 annual events attracting a total audience of 19 million people.
- Over the last years, the EAA has strengthened relationships with the EU governing bodies to ensure the inclusion of arenas as part of the policy-making decisions. EAA has been involved in a number of self-funded activities and projects in three key areas: live music, sports and education, training & research.

About ARA:

- The Arena Resilience Alliance (ARA) is a special purpose group, created by the European Arenas Association (EAA) to demonstrate solidarity and the need for concerted action.
- The ARA is fully supported by Euroleague Basketball, the European Hockey Clubs Alliance, the members of the European Arenas Association and other European large capacity multi-event venues.
- The ARA was established by Olivier Toth, CEO, Rockhal, Luxembourg, and Robert Fitzpatrick, CEO, The Odyssey Trust in Northern Ireland (owners of The SSE Arena, Belfast), who both recognised the urgent need for arenas to unite and to raise awareness on the current difficulties of these venues and what impact their definitive closure would have on communities.
- The ARA is working closely with the EU to advance awareness of the importance of the physical infrastructure of arenas and their contribution to the wellness of every European citizen.

Role of European Arenas in the Live Event Ecosystem:

- Across Europe, arenas are the host for major live cultural and sporting events and partners to those who organise, promote, play and perform.
- In normal times, arenas are major local employers; a central hub for a host of third-party service providers; a key player in national and regional tourism ecosystems; a forum for business sponsorship and networking opportunities; and a centre for social gatherings, local communities, friends and families, fan groups, visitors and tourists 365 days a year.