



Press release

[The 2023 Creators Conference: Empowering Music Creators](#)

At the 2023 Creators Conference, European composers and songwriters call on the EU to put fairness for creators and sustainability of the music sector at the heart of its policies.

21st of March 2023, Brussels

On the 21st of March 2023, the Creators Conference, held under the patronage of the European Parliament and with the support of the Cultural Creators Friendship Group (CCFG), took place at Cinema Palace in Brussels. Organised by the [European Composer and Songwriter Alliance](#) (ECSA), the event gathered creators, EU policy makers and stakeholders from the music sector to discuss European music creators' present and future challenges.

As expressed by Mariya Gabriel, Commissioner for Innovation, Research, Culture, Education and Youth: “The European music sector is facing acute challenges, from the intensification of the digital transformation, the need for environmental sustainability, the legitimate aspiration for more diversity, fair remuneration of creators, competition from outside Europe, the lack of data and transparency, and the list goes on. This makes the Creators' Conference even more important.”

ECSA President Helienne Lindvall opened the event by introducing the key topics of the conference: music streaming, AI and new technologies, contractual practices and the EU strategy for the music sector. She also warmly welcomed the European Parliament's forthcoming report on music streaming and added: “All over the world, music creators denounce the inequities of the music streaming market. In the streaming era, great songs are more important than ever. That those who create those songs are paid the least in the music value chain cannot be justified and needs to be addressed, urgently. The music industry and legislators must now work together to fix streaming, to ensure it becomes fair and sustainable for composers and songwriters, in order to secure a diverse and prosperous future for the entire sector.”

Keynote speaker MEP Ibán García del Banco (S&D, Spain), rapporteur of the European Parliament's report on “Cultural diversity and the situation of authors in the European music streaming market” addressed the audience with a keynote speech: “Today, composers and songwriters are the first creative driving force in the streaming market: they shouldn't be the last one to benefit from it [...] We should ensure that the pie is shared in an equitable manner and that music authors receive a fair share.”

The first panel was dedicated to music streaming and how to build a sustainable future for music creators. During the discussion, ECSA President Helienne Lindvall insisted on the need to assess the functioning of the entire music streaming market: “To make streaming sustainable for music, we should look at the bigger picture, including competition issues, the legal nature of a stream, as well as the current allocation of

revenues per stream. It is also essential to improve music authors' identification on streaming services, notably by ensuring a comprehensive and correct metadata allocation from the time of creation.”

Transparency and consent were also identified as key elements for the use of music creators' works by AI, during a session dedicated to the threats and opportunities raised by AI. In his keynote, MEP Alexis Georgoulis highlighted the importance to address AI to protect authors rights: “This is a new field with unknown consequences and we need to collaborate in the European Parliament to protect copyright, transparency and consent of authors and performers in this new AI era, against any misappropriation of their work.”

During the second panel, various speakers addressed the issue of buy-out contracts and coercive publishing, in a context where music authors are pressured to sign contracts that include unfair terms and conditions. Emmanuelle du Chalard, Deputy Head of the Copyright Unit (DG CNECT) at the European Commission, announced that the Commission is planning to launch a study on buyouts and similar contractual practices. Composer Michael Price emphasized: “The fate of the next generation of diverse, creative, musical artists rests on the fair contracts and royalty settlements we make now. Without that fairness, we're locking out a whole generation of new talent.”

The last session of the conference was dedicated to the EU strategy for the music sector, with an exchange between ECSA Vice-President and Austrian composer Zahra Mani and Georg Haeusler, Director for Culture, Creativity and Sport in the European Commission (DG EAC). Zahra Mani stated: “The European strategy to uphold and strengthen the music sector must focus on the needs of music creators to ensure a sustainable future through fair practice, visibility, promotion, discoverability and a mutual commitment to art, culture and music in society.”

ECSA Honorary President and President of the International Music Council (IMC) Alfons Karabuda closed the conference by highlighting the value of music itself and how it contributes to film, theatre and games as well as the cultural diversity and freedom of speech that strengthens the foundation on which any democratic society stands: “Music is a bridge between cultures, an accelerator for businesses, and certainly the reason for many EU and global innovations *raison d'être*.”

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About ECSA:

The European Composer and Songwriter Alliance (ECSA) represents over 30,000 professional composers and songwriters in 27 European countries. With 54 member organisations across Europe, the Alliance speaks for the interests of music creators of art and classical music (contemporary), film & audiovisual music, as well as popular music.

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