

European Composer and Songwriter Alliance

ECSA's Manifesto: Shaping Policies for the Future of Music Authors

ECSA's core mission is to defend and promote the rights and interests of composers and songwriters at European and international level, with the aim of improving their social and economic conditions, as well as enhancing their artistic freedom. With this manifesto, our Alliance seeks to effectively champion the needs and priorities of music authors, helping to shape policies that support the growth and sustainability of the whole music sector.

Manifesto



Co-funded by
the European Union

ECSA's core mission is to defend and promote the rights and interests of **composers and songwriters** at European and international level, with the aim of **improving their social and economic conditions**, while enhancing their artistic freedom. Confronted with challenges such as the **use of their works by AI providers without consent, dismal streaming royalties, unfair contractual practices**, and a pervasive lack of transparency and accountability in the music industry, most creators are simply unable to get **fair remuneration** from the exploitation of their works.

With this manifesto, our Alliance seeks to effectively **champion the needs and priorities of music authors**, helping to shape policies on a European level while supporting the **growth and sustainability of the whole music sector**.

KEY PRIORITIES



Ensure **generative AI** respects the rights of creators, and the **fundamental principles of consent, transparency and remuneration**

ACTIONS

- 1 Ensure that music authors can exercise **informed consent** by assessing the application of the **text and data mining (TDM)** exception to generative AI and allowing them to **re-serve their rights** in practice.
- 2 Make sure that the AI Act is implemented in an effective way that preserves authors' rights and promotes the **highest level of transparency for the input and the output of AI models**.
- 3 Consider effective and enforceable mechanisms to **remunerate music authors for the AI-generated output** to preserve the sustainability of their professions.
- 4 Place all those principles at the heart of a **future AI strategy for the cultural and creative industries**, that promotes cultural diversity and original works.

Fix **music streaming** and make it sustainable for music creators by implementing the **European Parliament recommendations adopted in 2024**

ACTIONS

- 1 **Share the streaming pie in an equitable and fair manner** by restoring the **value of songs**, the **fundamental role of music authors**, and rethinking the **legal nature of a stream**.
- 2 Address the **high level of concentration in the music market** and assess the impact of music streaming on other forms of exploitation.

3 Improve the **identification of creators on streaming services** with complete and accurate song metadata, properly crediting all contributing parties from the point of release.

- 4 Ensure that the streaming pie can grow to the benefit of the entire music sector through **more realistic market-oriented pricing models**.
- 5 Assess how the music industry counts streams and allocates revenues, and consider **alternative and fairer models in consultation with all stakeholders**, including music creators.
- 6 Improve the **transparency of algorithms and curated playlists** and assess their influence on music listeners and cultural diversity.
- 7 Ensure **prominence and discoverability of European works** on music streaming services.

Ensure **fair and balanced contracts** to improve the working conditions of **composers and songwriters**

ACTIONS

- 1 Introduce effective EU-wide legislative solutions to **prevent buyout contracts and coercive publishing**, building on the work of the European Parliament and the Council during the French Presidency.
- 2 Ensure that all contracts fully comply with EU law including the **principle of appropriate and proportionate remuneration, the transparency obligation and all other provisions** enshrined in Articles 18-23 of the CDSM Directive.
- 3 Encourage authors' contractual counterparts to engage

in **collective bargaining agreements with authors' associations** to negotiate better contracts and working conditions.

- 4 Allow the **publication of recommended rates and model contracts** to help improving the negotiation process and the fairness of commissioning contracts for music authors.
- 5 Make sure that EU and Member States' **public support and tax incentives cannot benefit entities that circumvent laws** related to the fair remuneration of creators.

Adopt a **comprehensive strategy to ensure the sustainability of the European music sector**, as outlined by the **2024 One Voice for European Music report**

ACTIONS

- 1 Adopt a **clear and comprehensive policy strategy for the music sector**, reflecting its economic, social and cultural importance across Europe, and supported by a **strengthened Music Moves Europe dialogue**.
- 2 Ensure a stronger financial support through a **dedicated "Music Strand" within the next Creative Europe programme and streamline funding across other programmes** of the EU such as Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, and structural and regional funds.
- 3 Set up a **European Music Observatory to independently collect data and assess the need for interventions at EU level**, addressing gaps and enhancing the diversity and competitiveness of the European music sector.

- 1 Mission letter to Glenn Micallef (September 2024), https://commission.europa.eu/document/download/68b8682b-ca47-461b-bc95-c98195919eb0_en?filename=Mission%20letter%20-%20MICALLEF.pdf
- 2 European Parliament report on "Cultural diversity and the conditions for authors in the European music streaming market" (2023/2054(INI)) Rapporteur: Ibán García Del Blanco (S&D, Spain) (January 2024), https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-9-2023-0388_EN.html
- 3 The Directive 2019/790 on Copyright in the Digital Single Market includes provisions on 'Fair remuneration in exploitation contracts of authors and performers' (Title IV, Chapter 3, Articles 18 to 23).
- 4 One Voice for European Music "Europe Day" report (May 2024) <https://one-voiceforeuropeanmusic.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/One-Voice-for-European-Music-Belgian-Presidency-recommendations-9-may-2024.pdf>
- 5 European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, Clarke, M., Vroonhof, P., 4 Snijders, J., et al., Feasibility study for the establishment of a European Music Observatory: final report, Publications Office, 2020, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2766/9491>

REFERENCES

The Situation of Artists and Cultural Workers and the postCOVID-19 Cultural Recovery in the European Union’, Study requested by the European Parliament, Policy Department for Structural and Cohesion Policies Directorate-General for Internal Policies (March 2021),

[Link](#)

Open Method of Coordination (OMC) report on “The status and working conditions of artists and cultural and creative professionals” (June 2023),

[Link](#)

ECSA Report “Navigating the Path to Fair Practice” (2023),

[Link](#)

Proposal with recommendations to the Commission on an “EU framework for the social and professional situation of artists and workers in the cultural and creative sectors.”
Rapporteurs: Domènec Ruiz Devesa (S&D, Spain) and Antonius Manders (EPP, the Netherlands) (November 2023)

[Link](#)

Joint statements and letters on AI
Joint letter to Members of the European Parliament on the impact of Artificial Intelligence on the European creative community (July 2024),

[Link](#)

Authors, performers and other creative workers’ organisations joint statement on generative artificial intelligence and the EU AI Act (April 2024),

[Link](#)

For an innovation and creator friendly AI Act Europe’s creative community urges EU policymakers to put transparency back at the heart of the EU AI Act (November 2023),

[Link](#)

Authors, performers and other creative workers’ organisations joint statement on generative artificial intelligence and the draft AI Act (September 2024),

[Link](#)

Joint statement from authors’ and performers’ organisations on Artificial Intelligence and the AI Act (February 2023),

[Link](#)

Motion for a European Parliament resolution on “Cultural diversity and the conditions for authors in the European music streaming market” (2023/2054(INI)), Rapporteur: Ibán García Del Blanco (S&D, Spain) (January 2024),

[Link](#)

ECSA Report “Music streaming and its impact on music authors. Why we should fix streaming and how to ensure a sustainable future for all music creators” (July 2023),

[Link](#)

ECSA Report “ECSA’s vision on how Europe can prevent buyouts” (2021),

[Link](#)

“The Stocktaking Exercise on the Effectiveness of the European Copyright Framework” (2022),

[Link](#)

EP Study, “Buyout contracts imposed by platforms in the cultural and creative sector” (2023),

[Link](#)

The European Media Industry Outlook,

[Link](#)

One Voice for European Music Initiative (May 2024),

[Link](#)

Helienne Lindvall and Tobias Stenkjaer, “Music Streaming: How to Make It Sustainable for Music Creators” (April 2024),

[Link](#)

“ECSA Report “Music streaming and its impact on music authors. Why we should fix streaming and how to ensure a sustainable future for all music creators” Julv 2023)”

The European Composer and Songwriter Alliance (ECSA) represents over 30,000 professional composers and songwriters in 29 European countries. With 59 member organisations across Europe and beyond, the Alliance speaks for the creators of art and classical music (contemporary), film and audiovisual music, as well as popular music. ECSA’s core mission is to defend and promote the rights and interests of composers and songwriters with the aim of improving their social and economic conditions, as well as enhancing their artistic freedom.

For more information about our organisation, please visit:
www.composeralliance.org.

© ECSA, European Composer and Songwriter Alliance