

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



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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>

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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:
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