

# GESAC ANNUAL REPORT

2024



# PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD

We are pleased and honoured to present the 2024 GESAC Annual Report. This year we celebrate GESAC's 35 years of successful promotion and advocacy of authors' interests, with a proud track record of driving meaningful and positive change for creators in Europe. GESAC has been a driving force in advancing the EU legal framework in favour of authors and their societies and has become a pillar of EU copyright and cultural policy making. Special thanks go to the GESAC secretariat and all GESAC members who made these achievements possible. It is with confidence that I look forward to a similarly productive future; our joint efforts will continue to significantly advance the causes of authors' societies and protect the interests of their members.

This past year saw changes in the GESAC Board and the Secretariat, and in the European Parliament and the European Commission, with a new legislature poised to address critical issues for authors and composers. GESAC and its members have already engaged with many of the new EU policymakers at a very impactful level, with an impressive Meet the Authors gathering and a series of high-level meetings.

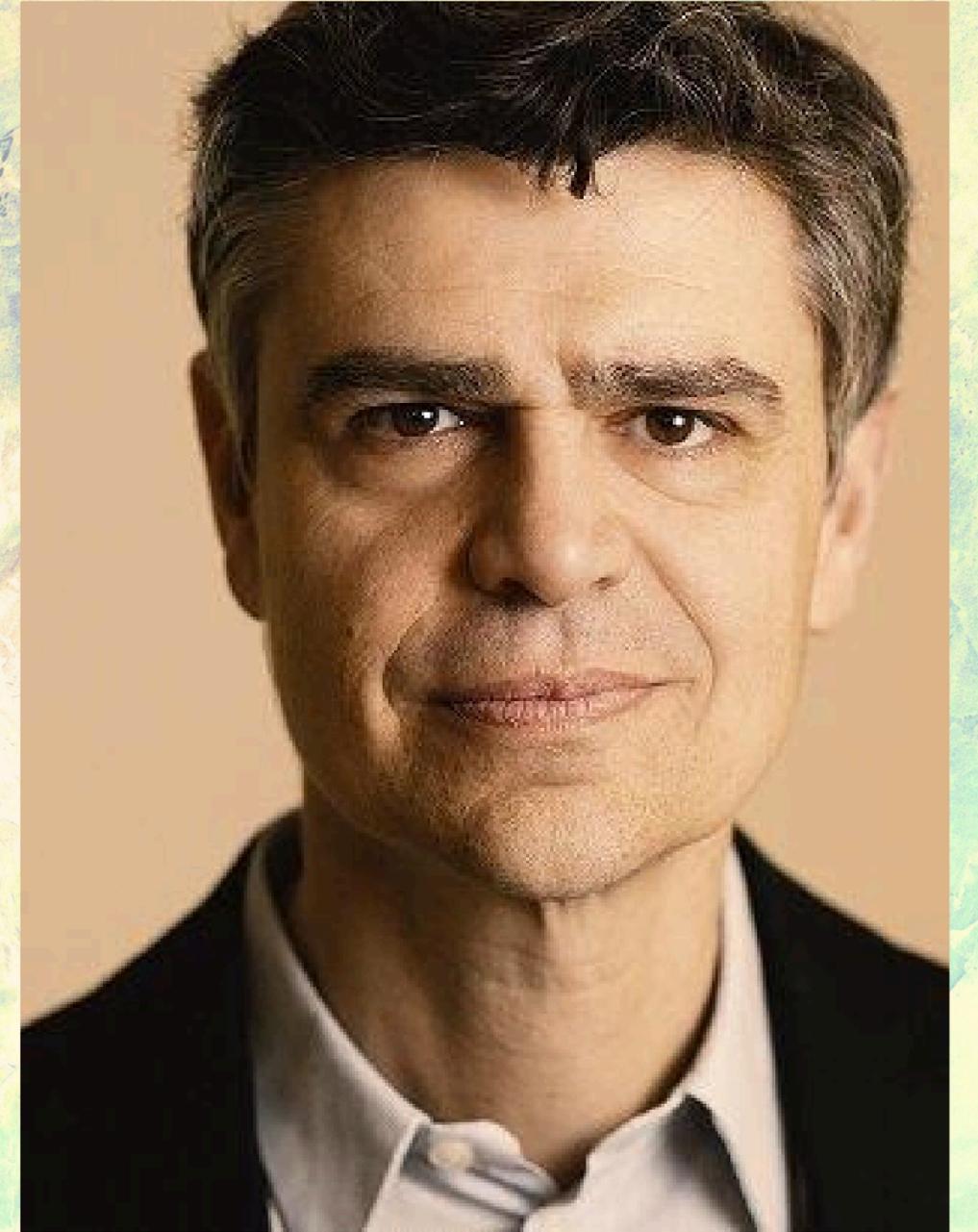
The ongoing challenges posed by the generative AI services remain central to our members' core priorities, with current EU policy developments critically shaping both immediate responses and long-term strategies. While GESAC's efforts contributed to crucial safeguards for creators with the adoption of the AI Act, including important principles for the exercise and enforcement of authors' rights, the implementation phase has exposed significant operational challenges for the creative sector.

GESAC's proactive coalition-building and institutional engagement will prove vital in addressing these challenges through collaborative solutions and sustained dialogue. The same is true of other policy priorities such as the streaming economy and buy-out contracts: In the face of a powerful, and vocal, global platforms it is essential that creators retain control over their works and receive appropriate remuneration for their use.

And it is equally essential for GESAC to stay dedicated to its mission. We remain committed to building a future where creativity is safeguarded and celebrated. This is of course only possible through the strong collaborative spirit within our community. We extend our sincere thanks to our members, and look forward to working with our partners and supporters in both the EU institutions and the wider community.

**Warm regards,**

***David EL Sayegh***



# MESSAGE FROM OUR GENERAL MANAGER

Dreams pay, or, they can. As all of us in the creative and cultural industries have witnessed, or lived, harnessing creativity successfully is extremely fulfilling and rewarding. These rewards can be hard earned: Our sector now faces unprecedented challenges on many fronts, and we must be vigilant, comprehensive and forthright in promoting and protecting it.

In 2024 we welcomed new leadership with the election of David El Sayegh as President of GESAC. His vision, alongside the expertise of our newly elected Board members are crucial to address all the pressing issues. As we reflect on the achievements and challenges of the past year, I am proud to be a part of GESAC's unwavering commitment to safeguarding authors' rights and fostering a thriving creative ecosystem in Europe.

This year marked significant milestones in our advocacy efforts. Alongside other rightsholders and cultural organisations, GESAC was instrumental in informing policy that shaped the EU AI Act. Our continuous engagement and informed statements emphasised the urgent need to protect our sector from the risks posed by generative AI while urging transparency and compliance with EU rules. These efforts underscore our dedication to safeguarding creators' rights in the face of technological evolution that often outpaces regulatory scrutiny.

As efforts continue to ensure a practical, and fair, European regulatory landscape for ethical and responsible AI, two other matters remain in sharp focus: the ongoing need to rebalance the streaming economy, and to protect creators from coercive buy-out contracts and other forms of platform exploitation. These challenges directly impact creators' rights and appropriate remuneration, underscoring the urgent need for strong legislative protections that safeguard their interests.

We must continue our efforts of allied advocacy with ad-hoc coalitions of rightsholders and other cultural associations, which must coalesce further on specific issues and maintain a united voice in the face of concerted pressure.

On personal note, I extend my heartfelt thanks to our members for their warm welcome and constructive engagement throughout my first year at GESAC. Coupled with the commitment from the team at the Brussels secretariat, it has made my start here fruitful and truly enjoyable.

Together, we have achieved remarkable results in the past year. With persistence and collaboration, I am confident that we will continue driving positive change for creators in Europe!

***Adriana Moscoso del Prado***



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# MAIN POLICY FOCUS

During the previous EU term, significant strides were made toward protecting and promoting European creators and their work in the digital age, with dedicated reports from the European Parliament on music streaming and buy-out issues, and the adoption of the AI Act.

But they were only the first step.

Progress in these areas will require yet more collaboration and determination to be transformed into effective implementable measures at EU level, and new legislative proposals from the European Commission. While preparations, elections and formation of the new EU legislature has covered an important part of 2024, GESAC members identified 3 key priorities to focus our advocacy efforts for the new EU term between 2024 and 2029 to immediately start working with the newly elected MEPs and the newly appointed Commissioners:

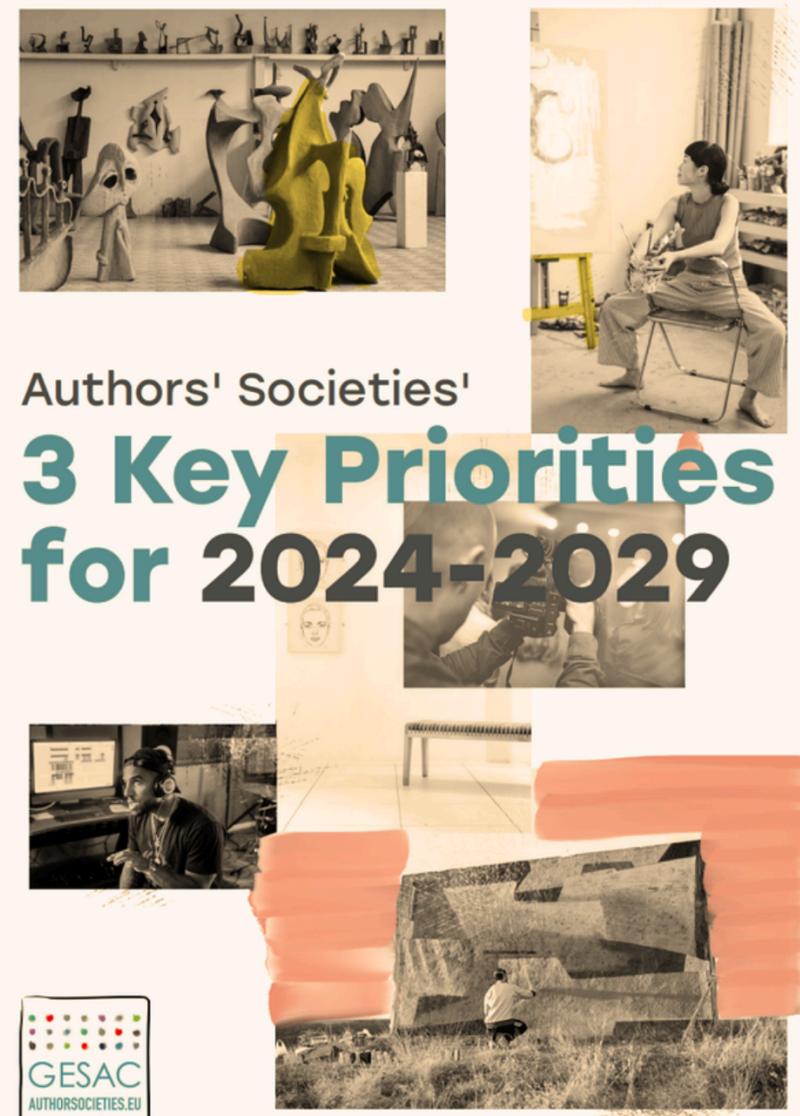
**Generative AI:** Advocating for clear actionable measures to ensure licensing of copyright protected works and appropriate remuneration of creators by Generative AI services.

**Platform exploitation:** Asking for a dedicated legislative proposal to tackle coercive buy-out practices imposed on authors and composers, and circumvention of EU's protective measures by non-EU-based VOD platforms

**Rebalancing of the Streaming Economy:** Introduction of new or additional rules at EU level requiring algorithmic transparency and discoverability of European works on music streaming platforms.

Read our 3 key priorities [document here](#) These 3 topics, and the presentation of GESAC and the role of collective management, dominated GESAC's outreach over the past year as detailed in the following sections

**EMPOWERING EUROPE'S CREATORS:**



Authors' Societies'

## 3 Key Priorities for 2024-2029



# ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Artificial intelligence is poised to be one of the most significant transformations the creative sector has ever experienced. AI remained a key focus for GESAC throughout 2024: Ensuring that creators are at the heart of discussions and European regulations surrounding AI is one of GESAC's highest priorities. GESAC and its members have continued to take a leading role in advocating for creators' rights in key policy and decision-making forums at EU level.

The AI and copyright related work of the EU institutions progressed along two primary strands throughout 2024:

- **Final adoption of the AI Act and the implementation of its copyright relevant provisions**
- **Discussions on substantial copyright law and implementation of the copyright acquis**

The EU AI Act represents a landmark regulatory framework aimed at managing the risks associated with artificial intelligence, with a particular focus on ensuring safety, fundamental rights, and responsible deployment across various sectors, initially with a risk-based approach. The Act categorizes AI systems based on four risk levels—minimal, high, unacceptable, and specific—allowing tailored regulatory approaches for each. The AI Act also introduces horizontal rules and principles on general-purpose AI (GPAI) models, addressing copyright and authors' rights considerations inherent to their development and use. Specifically, it requires the GPAI models to respect EU copyright rules, regardless of where models are trained, and to provide a sufficiently detailed summary to allow the exercise and enforcement of copyright, while respecting the trade secrets of the relevant services.

A provisional agreement on the AI Act was reached in December 2023, paving the way for final formal adoption in June 2024, during which time there were final small tweaks to the actual wording of the provisions and the relevant recitals until the text was voted in the Plenary.

***Throughout the genesis of the act and each stage of its deployment, GESAC and its members were closely involved, with regular direct exchanges with Commission officials, and MEPs and their advisors . In tandem, a broad coalition of organisations in Europe's creative and cultural sectors was formed to work first on the adoption of the AI Act with relevant copyright provisions and then for the implantation process of those provisions.***

**In February 2024, GESAC, alongside over 200 organisations in Europe's cultural and creative sectors, issued a joint statement calling on the Member States to show global leadership and approve the AI Act. GESAC also held several meetings with the services of the Commission to keep the final wording in line with the political agreement.**

**On 13 March**, the EU AI Act was adopted with an overwhelming majority at the Plenary vote of the European Parliament. GESAC, alongside the coalition, welcomed this outcome, and thanked Members of the European Parliament for the essential role they have played in supporting creators and rightsholders throughout the legislative process. The statement can be found [here](#). 

The AI act was:

- adopted by Parliament in March 2024
- endorsed by Council in May 2024.
- formally signed on 13 June 2024
- published in the EU's Official Journal on 12 July 2024.

The Commission and its AI Office launched a comprehensive public consultation just before the summer to receive input for their two immediate deliverables as regards the implementation of the AI Act, namely i) the “transparency template” through which GPAI models should provide ‘sufficiently detailed summary’ of their training data; and ii) the obligation of the GPAI models to provide a policy to comply with EU copyright law. It was also announced that the copyright policy will be dealt with under the ‘Code of Practice’ to which GPAI models will be expected to commit to demonstrate their compliance.

***GESAC provided detailed answers to the public consultation explaining the needs and concerns of authors and their societies. GESAC, together with other rightsholders, also worked on a model transparency template and its separate model copyright compliance template, which were presented to the AI Office and the Copyright Unit.***

Towards the end of **October 2024**, GESAC, along with 23 other creators' and rightsholder organisations, sent **[a joint letter](#)**  to EU policymakers. The letter called for robust implementation of the AI Act to ensure that European Cultural and Creative Industries are protected and promoted in anticipation of the forthcoming work of the AI Office with the formation of the Code of Practice drafting working groups and actual drafting of the Transparency Template.



## AI Code of Practice

In July of 2024 the European AI Office invited eligible general-purpose AI model providers, downstream providers and other industry organisations, civil society organisations, rightsholders organisations, as well as academia and other independent experts to express their interest to participate in the drawing-up of the Code of Practice. The code aimed at establishing a set of guidelines facilitating compliance with the Act's obligations, and to be signed by GPAI providers on a voluntary basis.

Four different Working Groups were formed in October to draft the Code; 1) Copyright and Transparency 2) Risk identification and assessment 3) Technical risk mitigation and 4) Internal risk management and governance.

**GESAC actively participated in all relevant working groups, particularly the Copyright Working Group, where it played an engaged role. The initial Code of Practice (CoP) draft released in November faced strong criticism from rightholders, including GESAC through the written contribution prepared with the Madrid Group, which highlighted its deficiencies and lack of effectiveness through detailed feedback. Despite sustained input and proposed solutions from GESAC and other rightholders throughout revisions in December and early 2025, subsequent versions of the CoP document deteriorated further in quality, disregarding the collective concerns of the rightholders community.**

Through ongoing consultations, direct policy dialogues, and public advocacy efforts, GESAC consistently emphasised the necessity of establishing an effective licensing framework, positioning collective management organizations (CMOs) as central enablers of such a system.

## Transparency Template

The Code of Practice (CoP) is drafted by independent chairs appointed by the Commission and voluntarily signed by GPAI providers. In contrast, the Template is a mandatory requirement under the AI Act for GPAI models, with the AI Office responsible for its drafting, incorporating both technical and political considerations.

The AI Office presented its first approach, but not an actual template document, at a meeting in December and asked the views of stakeholders, to which GESAC again provided dedicated answers based on the Madrid Group's comments and suggestions. Both the Code of Practice and the Template are due to be finalised before mid-2025 and to take effect after the entry into force deadline of August 2025.



## Substantive copyright law discussions:

The second half of 2024 saw Hungary assume the EU Presidency, and the start of a broad consultation on different aspects of AI and copyright among the Member States with a policy questionnaire issued to stakeholders in June.

This enabled GESAC to consolidate its stance on key AI-related copyright challenges, formulating unified positions on generative AI policies. Our responses to the consultation outlined actionable measures for national and EU frameworks to ensure transparency, consent, and appropriate remuneration for creators when their works are used by AI systems, which were submitted to the EU Presidency, Member States, and the European Commission

The Hungarian Presidency compiled a summary report synthesizing EU Member States' written contributions and discussions from dedicated meetings toward the end of its term. The Hungarian authorities shared key elements of the draft report, prior to its publication, when attending GESAC's November General Meeting. The final report incorporated multiple proposals championed by GESAC, emphasising the critical role of CMOs in achieving balanced copyright frameworks for AI technologies. GESAC's Vice-President András Szinger, CEO of Hungarian authors' society Artisjus was also invited by the Presidency as a speaker at the Presidency Conference on Copyright.

***Further to these initiatives the European Commission's Directorate General responsible for Competition conducted a public consultation on Generative AI and Virtual Worlds in March 2024. GESAC responded, again underlining the crucial role to be played by CMOs to ensure appropriate and proportionate remuneration of authors in any emerging market. Possible competition risks that major AI companies can cause were also indicated.***



## Looking ahead

In view of the adoption of the Code of Practice for GPAI models and the transparency template, GESAC prioritised its efforts in late 2024 and early 2025 to establish an understanding **that fostering a licensing market, with CMOs as central players, needs to become the guiding objective** for the implementation of the AI Act and any future EU copyright policy.

With the rather negative position taken by the European Commission's AI Office towards rightsholders' interests in the process of drafting the Code of Practice and transparency template - risking harm to Europe's cultural and creative industries - GESAC intensified its advocacy as of late 2024 to bring the issue to a higher political level. This push gained momentum after new EU Commissioners took office, including Executive Vice President Henna Virkkunen, who publicly committed to enabling a functional licensing market during her November confirmation hearing and the January 2025 Meet the Authors event. How this vision translates into policy remains uncertain, with key developments expected throughout 2025 and beyond.

***CMOs are well-positioned to ensure proper remuneration for authors especially given the mass use of protected works in AI training and development. The efficiency and collective power of CMOs are vital in streamlining eventual licensing processes providing access to wide and culturally diverse repertoires and ensuring appropriate remuneration for all creators, regardless of their fame or popularity, particularly in face of AI companies backed by large tech corporations.***

# BUY-OUT

Buy-outs are a glaring example of the power imbalance between major commercial users and creators. The European Parliament has repeatedly flagged these buyouts as abusive and called for action to stop them in the last legislative term. The much anticipated study of the European Commission (DG Connect) on “contractual practices affecting the transfer of copyright and related rights and the creators and producers’ ability to exploit their rights” was granted to a consortium led by Millieu and officially launched in February 2024 .

GESAC engaged directly with the study consortium, providing detailed analyses of how buyout practices harm creators and the need for creators to rely on their collective management organisations (CMOs) to ensure their “appropriate and proportionate remuneration”. GESAC facilitated expert interviews by connecting researchers with its member organizations and authors to share firsthand experiences with unfair contractual terms. The study’s credibility relied heavily on these contributions, making GESAC’s role essential in shaping its evidence base.

**At the April 8-9 Belgian Presidency conference in Namur—focused on fair remuneration—GESAC and SABAM presented on the risks of buyout.** DG Connect Media Policy Director Giuseppe Abbamonte highlighted buyouts as a growing “value gap” requiring EU action, later reaffirming the Commission’s focus during GESAC’s November General Meeting.

Throughout 2024, GESAC maintained dialogue with DG Connect officials, and also partnered with academic researchers examining buyout impacts.

***This advocacy gained momentum in January 2025 when Executive Vice President Henna Virkkunen acknowledged buyouts as a priority during her Meet the Authors address, followed by a February 2025 [letter from 48 MEPs](#) demanding legislative action. Our advocacy against buy-out contracts remains a cornerstone of our mission, as we continue to push for legislative intervention that protect creators from unfair practices and ensure sustainable careers.***

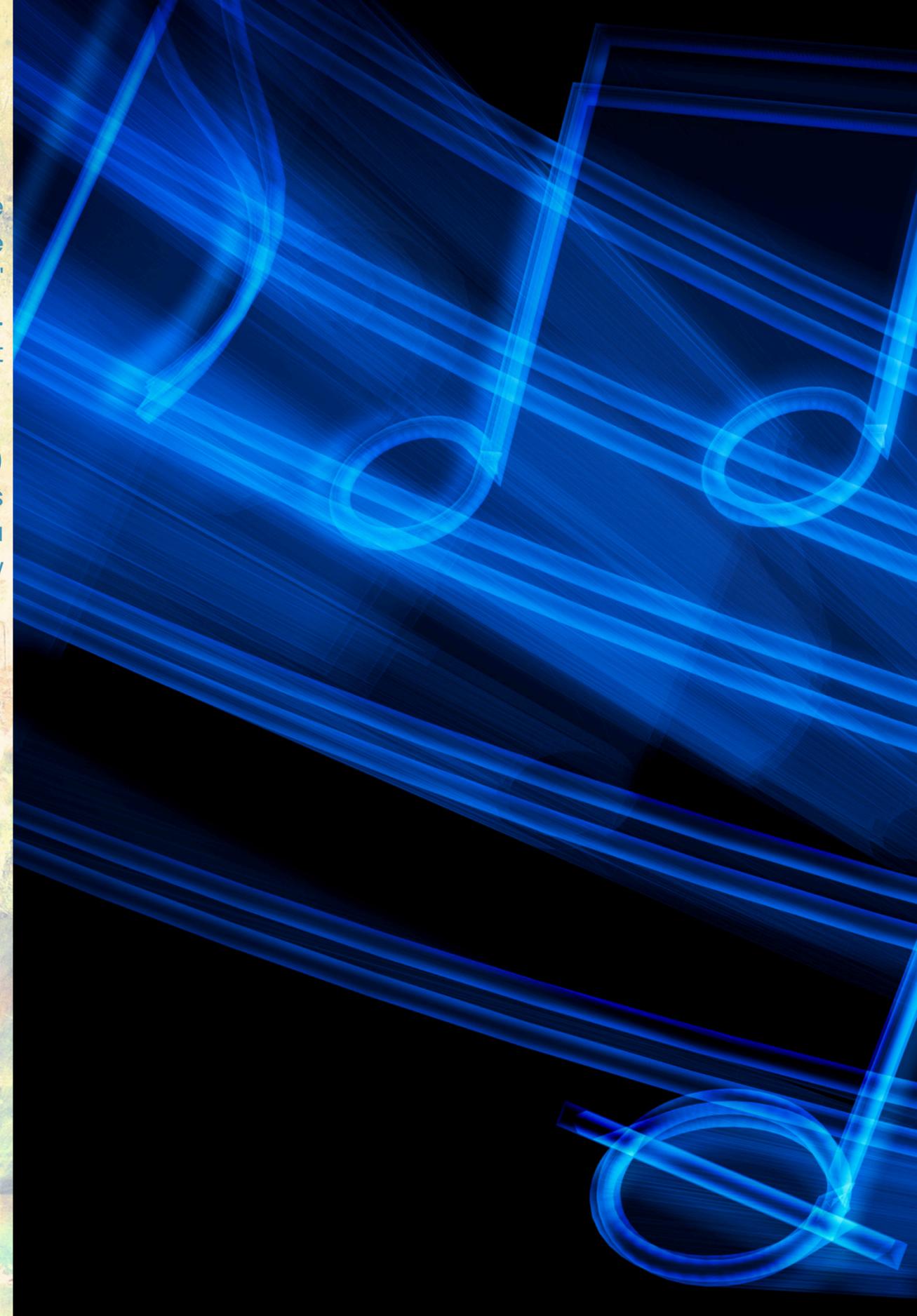


# STREAMING ECONOMY

Addressing the music streaming market at EU level remained a key priority for GESAC in 2024. The European Parliament's adoption of its report on "Cultural diversity and conditions of authors in the European music streaming market" on 17 January - accurately reflecting creators and their societies' concerns and objectives - elevated this issue to an EU policy focus (the report can be [read here](#)). While previous Parliament resolutions had touched on streaming challenges, this dedicated report solidified their relevance within the EU policy agenda.

On 22 February 2024, the European Commission's DG EAC (Education and Culture Directorate) convened music sector representatives and EU Member State delegates under the Music Moves Europe initiative to discuss future EU music policies. The meeting, attended by Commissioner Iliana Ivanova, Belgian Minister Jan Jambon, 19 national representatives, and over 400 stakeholders, saw GESAC present its regulatory proposals for music streaming services.

***GESAC addressed the issues relating to creators' remuneration in the streaming market during the Belgian Presidency's April Copyright Conference in Namur, highlighting the ongoing unfairness faced by authors and composers on music streaming platforms, and calling for enhanced political focus on ensuring transparency and better remuneration of creators, who are still receiving the least from this key market that is the main source to access music for consumers, but yet to develop a more sustainable and reliable revenue growth for authors and composers.***



*GESAC sustained its advocacy efforts to keep music streaming issues prominent on the EU agenda amid institutional changes, including the new European Commission, Parliament's new legislative term with fresh MEPs, and other shifts in administrative leadership roles. From June to September, GESAC held meetings with Georg Haeusler (Director for Culture, Creativity and Sport, DG EAC) and Giuseppe Abbamonte (Director for Media Policy, DG Connect), Audiovisual Media Services Unit and the Copyright Unit to advocate for prioritising music streaming issues in their policy preparations for incoming EU Commissioners.*

At an industry event held in September 2024, Deputy Director General of DG Connect stated their interest in the music streaming issue and their intention to further investigate how to improve remuneration of creators within the streaming market and to ensure more transparency.

GESAC also took part in several industry meetings related to EU policy, including the Music Summit held in December in Bydgoszcz, Poland. This event helped prepare for the Polish Presidency and focused on how to include music policy in the EU agenda.

In its written contributions to the policy questionnaires prepared by the Polish Presidency on the forthcoming review of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive, and the Role of Collective Management, in January and February 2025 respectively, GESAC also addressed the need for further action in this field.

Finally, the **joint letter of 48 MEPs** published in February 2025, following our MTA event, also urged the European Commission to follow-up on the Parliament's Resolutions adopted in the last term, and introduce a legislative initiative on music streaming market.

# PRIVATE COPY

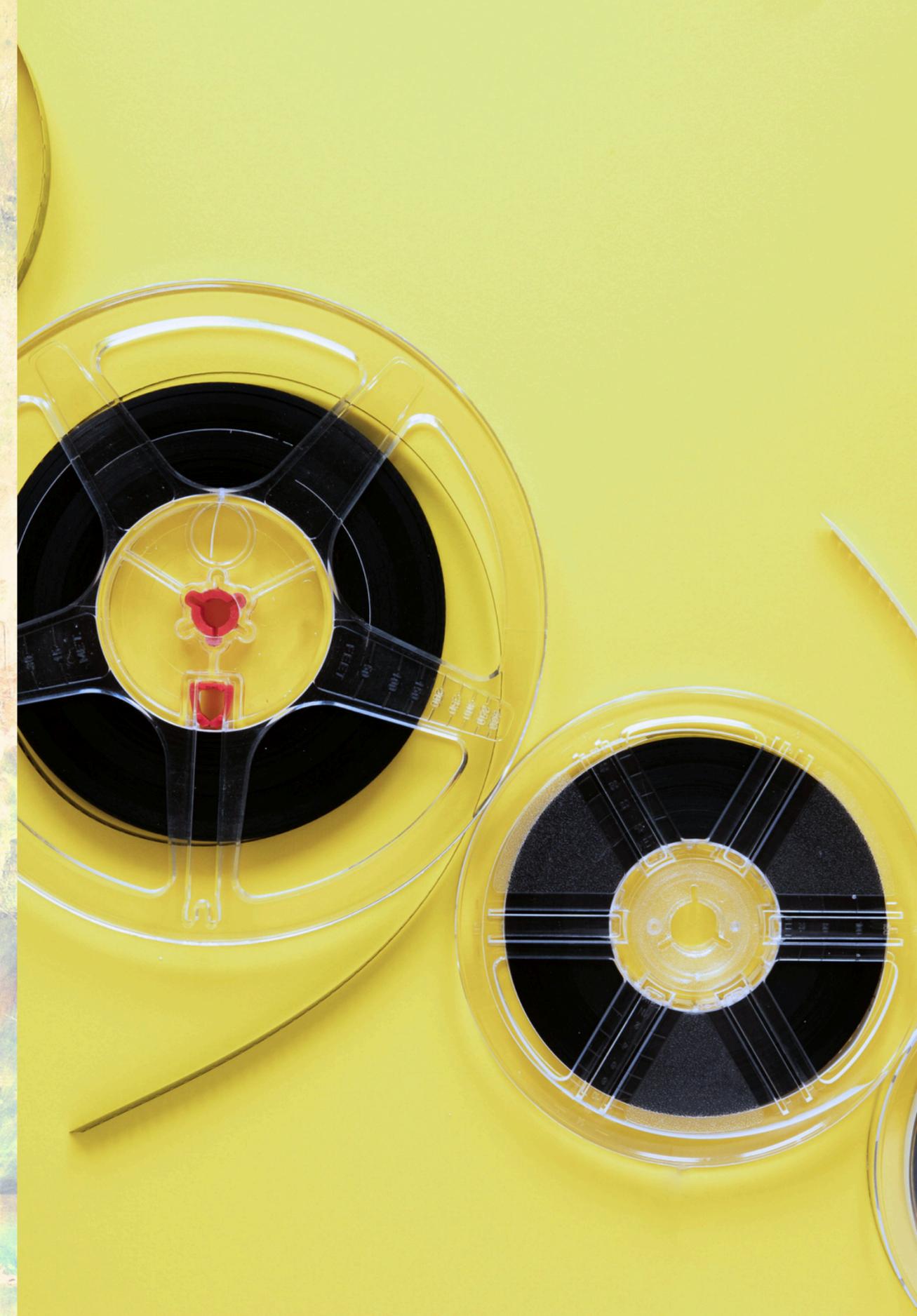
Private copying compensation has existed in most EU member states for decades and it has evolved, improved and adapted to new technologies, business models and consumer behaviours over time. The system provides consumers with legal certainty while allowing them make personal copies of songs, movies and other creative works on their devices. Private copy compensation remains a crucial revenue source for creators.

In the past year we continued to see attacks from electronic device manufacturers (mostly non-European) on the system of private copy compensation in Europe. GESAC started to engage with European Commission on this topic in April 2024, warning them against a possible campaign against the private copy regime from non-EU based device manufacturers, as the latter do at the beginning of every legislative term. This issue was then raised in further meetings and exchanges with DG Connect officials from September to December, including at our General Meeting in November.

In **December 2024** a joint statement of over 20 creators and rightholders organisations was issued, in reaction to a misinformed and intentionally misleading White Paper on private copy from Digital Europe. The joint statement called on governments and EU decision-makers to take a firm stand against new attempts to undermine the EU private copying levy practice.

In February 2025, GESAC together with 21 creators and rightholders organisation sent another joint letter to EU decision-makers in support of the private copy compensation system, as a follow-up action to further unfounded claims of global device manufacturers that refuse to comply with EU rules. Private copy continued to be an issue at Member state level too. In August 2024 Authors and Performers' rights organisations **issued a statement** urging the Finnish government to reverse their decision to cut private copying compensation that they provide from the state budget by half.

***GESAC worked with the Madrid Group and PACOM to gather updated technical information and develop communication and lobbying strategies for possible future discussions on this issue.***



# European elections

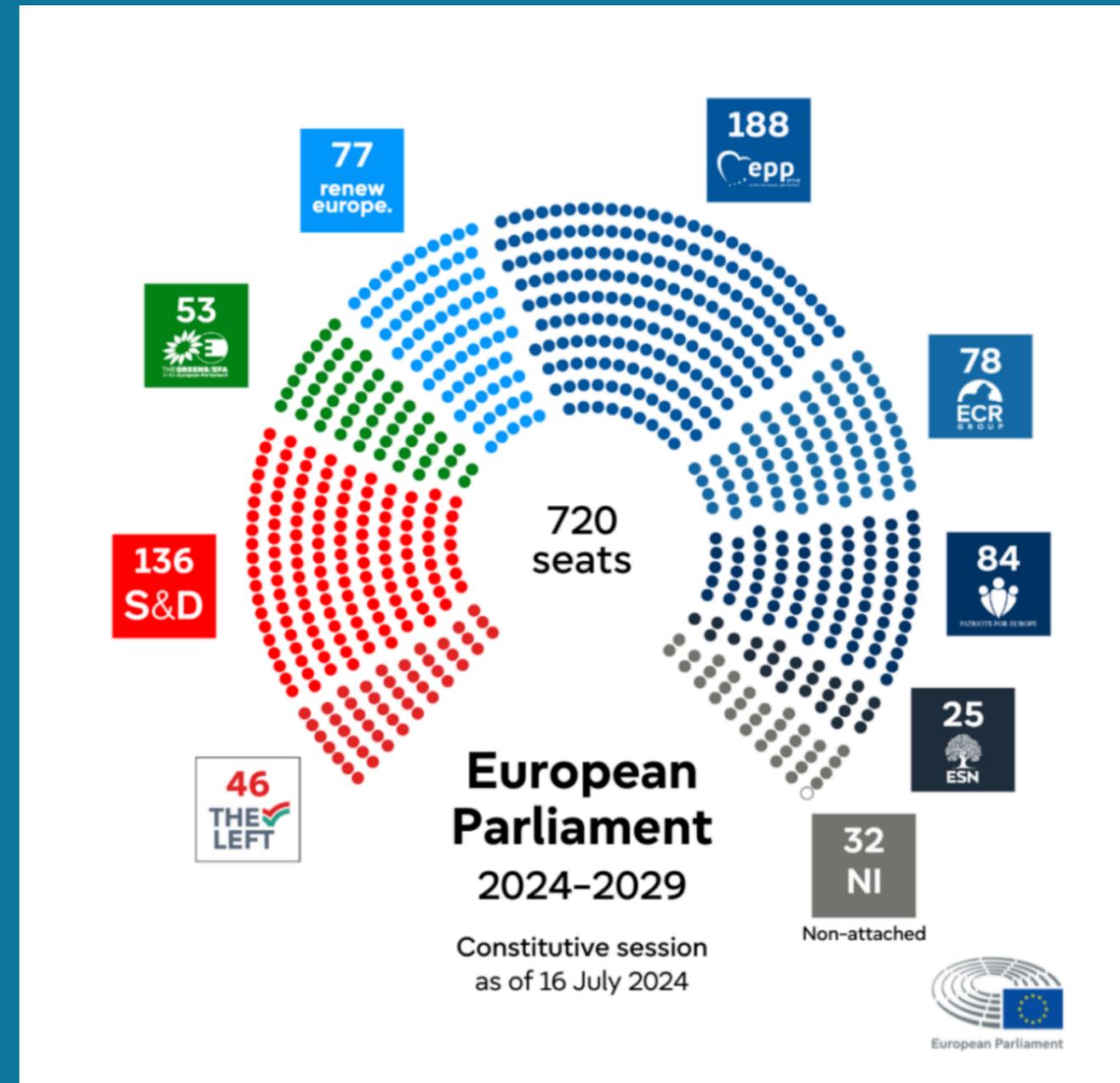
The **European elections**, held between 6 and 9 June, resulted in a more right-leaning European Parliament compared to the previous mandate.

The centre-right European People's Party (EPP) with 188 seats, maintains its position as the largest group in the Parliament. It emerged as the big winner of the elections, holding the upper hand in coalition-building as it can swing the parliamentary majority by joining forces with either the centre-left or the right. The Centre-left Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (S&D) remains the second largest group with 134 seats, despite losing votes. Other traditional parties, such as the Liberals (Renew) and the Greens, lost votes.

The European Conservatives and Reformists (ECR), and the new groups such as Identity and Democracy (now replaced by Patriots for Europe) and Europe of Sovereign Nations (ESN) gained seats and decisive power. These changes make forming voting majorities on common issues more difficult and alignment across the political spectrum much more challenging and fragile, affecting the EU policy making process considerably.

**In the context of copyright and cultural policy**, it is worth highlighting that several key Members of the Parliament from the previous legislature were re-elected. These include German MEPs Sabine Verheyen, Axel Voss and Christian Ehler, French MEP Laurence Farreng, Austrian MEP Hannes Heide, Spanish MEP Marcos Ros Sempere and Italian MEP Brando Benifei. Their continued presence in the Parliament may contribute to policy continuity and provide valuable experience in the ongoing development of culture and copyright related policy at EU level. Several newly appointed members have also already proven to be vocal champions of the cultural sector.

Given that **54% of MEPs in this mandate are newcomers**, prompt engagement was critical to shape the legislative agenda that directly influences the future of our sector. GESAC Secretariat worked closely with PACOM to map the elected MEPs and identify potential supporters of our issues, and to develop relationships and meet. **Accordingly, throughout September, as political activity in Brussels picked back up, the GESAC team held over 20 meetings with MEPs. GESAC continues to foster productive relationships with key policymakers with regular meetings and information exchanges.**



# European Commission

In the **new Commission**, the most pertinent appointees for our sector are:

- Henna Virkkunen (Executive Vice-president of the European Commission, covering Technological Sovereignty, Security and Democracy)
- Glenn Micallef (Commissioner responsible for Intergenerational Fairness, Youth, Culture and Sport).

Other notable Commissioners include:

- Teresa Ribeira (Clean, Just and Competitive Transition), Michael McGrath (Democracy, Justice, the Rule of Law and Consumer Protection)
- Stephane Séjourné (Prosperity and Industrial Strategy).

**GESAC has strategically engaged with newly appointed EU Commissioners and their teams to advance creators' rights**, prioritising direct dialogue with policymakers most relevant to the cultural and digital sectors. Immediately after the appointment of Commissioners and their Cabinet members, GESAC has started to build relations with them and held meetings to introduce GESAC and its priorities.





# CELEBRATING A EUROPE UNITED IN ITS CULTURAL DIVERSITY

*May 9, 2024*

*On the occasion of Europe Day, and as the European elections draw nearer, GESAC, representing more than 1 million authors and creators from all artistic fields through its members, the authors' societies, expressed its gratitude to the outgoing European Parliament for the unwavering support given to strengthening authors' rights and cultural diversity during its last 5-year mandate.*

*#EuropeDay*

*#UseYourVote*

*#UnitedInDiversity*



# Meet the Authors



***"Culture is at the heart of the European project and creators are its very source. The European Parliament expects that the Commission takes the needed steps to properly implement the AI Act and propose the dedicated legislation on buy-outs and music streaming that are critical for creators and have already been asked by several Parliamentary resolutions." MEP Laurence Farreng***

On 29 January 2025, GESAC held a new edition of its “Meet the Authors” gathering at the European Parliament. The event was co-hosted by MEPs Laurence Farreng (French-Renew), Marcos Ros Sempere (Spanish-S&D), and Bogdan Zdrojewski (Polish-EPP), with the participation of Executive Vice-President (EVP) Henna Virkkunen, responsible for Tech Sovereignty.

Over 35 creators from across Europe convened to initiate discussions with over 35 newly elected MEPs, joined by Commission officials, and national representatives. The dialogue effectively highlighted creators’ concerns and expectations for this new term, especially on issues related to GESAC’s 3 main priorities for the 2024–2029 agenda: Artificial Intelligence, Buy-out contracts, and Music streaming.

***The presence of EVP Virkkunen was especially noteworthy as it was her first public appearance at a cultural sector event since her nomination. She delivered an engaging and insightful speech, covering all three of GESAC’s priority issues. Virkkunen made specific and detailed reference to the need for licensing market for the use of protected works in AI training, touched on the problems experienced by creators in streaming market and the risks of coercive buyout contracts, echoing long-held positions of GESAC.***

***In addition to the co-hosts, several key MEPs took the floor to engage with creators and to express their support: First Vice-President of the Parliament Sabine Verheyen; Co-Chair of Parliament’s AI Act Supervision Group MEP Michael McNamara; leading voice on EUs copyright and AI policy, MEP Axel Voss; and Coordinator of the ‘Cultural Creators Friendship Group’ and S&D Coordinator for CULT, MEP Hannes Heide.***



The event provided honest and constructive exchange with MEPs, insightful interventions from GESAC representatives, and impactful and touching statements from creators. MEPs reiterated their ongoing support of creators, particularly in addressing challenges posed by global non-EU based AI and streaming platforms. They called on the European Commission to propose EU solutions to safeguard creators' rights.

The preparation of the event started in May 2024 and **as always GESAC members' great engagement, continuous support and close involvement were instrumental in ensuring the success of this event, with each contributing by bringing strong national delegations and asking their MEPs to join.** Many also organised dedicated side events with their respective policymakers substantially broadening the visibility and impact of the initiative. GESAC convened a preparatory meeting at SABAM's offices, fostering an environment where all participants could connect and collaborate closely, significantly strengthening the collective team spirit, and shared purpose among members.

**A photo gallery of the gathering can be found here**   
**An event wrap up video is available here**   
**The post event Press release can be read here** 

# COME AND MEET THE AUTHORS!

## A conversation with policymakers followed by a cocktail reception

*Faced with constant sector transformation, proliferation of **AI-generated content** and domination of the digital content market by a few **global platform-based services**, creators are confronted with complex challenges that need to be addressed at the EU level. These issues not only directly impact the EU's sovereignty and cultural diversity, but also **threaten the livelihoods of the creators** who are at the core of Europe's world-renowned cultural and creative industries.*

**Join us to hear firsthand experiences and authors' expectations from this new EU term!**

More about us: [authorsocieties.eu](https://authorsocieties.eu)

# INVITATION

**JANUARY 29, 2025**

**EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

**18:00 - 20:30**

**European creators and their collective management societies are coming to Brussels to meet the newly elected decision-makers**

## Under the patronage of

MEP Laurence FARRENG  
MEP Marcos ROS SEMPERE  
MEP Bogdan ZDROJEWSKI

 European Parliament  
Members salon

**Confirm your participation to**  
[alexia.pickard@gesac.org](mailto:alexia.pickard@gesac.org)

Organised by GESAC

 meet  
the authors

 GESAC  
AUTHORSOCIETIES.EU

## Lasting Legacy

Following the event, [48 MEPs sent a letter](#) to EVP Virkkunen and Commissioner Micallef (Commissioner for Intergenerational Fairness, Youth, Culture and Sport), reaffirming their shared commitment to Europe's creators and the creative economy. The widely shared letter directly supported GESAC's main concerns on AI, streaming and buy-outs. **Crucially, it concluded with further calls to action, urging that the "Commission must act now to finish the work we've started" and "translate the Parliament's repeated calls into concrete measures that protect creators."**

The event offered an excellent opportunity to produce valuable communication materials, including the event video and creators' interviews which are now being used to promote GESAC online. Content from the "Meet the Authors" event has been key in highlighting GESAC's policy position and broadening our reach. By using interviews with creators, GESAC has continued to increase its online visibility and engagement.

The event also received positive media coverage, featuring in notable EU level publications like Contexte, MLex and Electron Libre amongst others.

**Meet the Authors 2025 served as a striking testament to the creativity, expertise, and unwavering commitment within our community** to advocate for the improvement of authors' rights. The event also highlighted the strength of our relationships with a broad spectrum of key legislators, while effectively amplifying the voice of creators.

## Creators in the digital economy: finishing the work we started

Dear Executive Vice-President Virkkunen,

Dear Commissioner Micallef,

As Members of the European Parliament, we want to reaffirm our shared commitment to Europe's creators and the creative economy. Together, over the last EU term, European Parliament achieved significant progress, but there is more to be done to address the challenges and opportunities of today's digital economy.

The creative sector is rapidly evolving, and digitalisation continues to reshape the landscape. While the rise of global streaming platforms and artificial intelligence offers exciting possibilities, that the creative sector is at the forefront of, these changes also highlight the need to ensure fairness and protect Europe's creative strength and cultural diversity.

The efforts of the European Parliament have already laid essential foundations, such as embedding transparency and accountability for generative AI in the AI Act. But now it's vital to ensure these rules are effectively implemented, so a well-functioning market for licensing creators' works is created and generative AI providers comply with EU laws.

At the same time, we must address the long-standing imbalance in power between creators and global platforms. Dominant video-on-demand services continue to impose buy-out contracts that exploit creators, leaving them with little choice but to accept unfair terms. The Parliament has repeatedly condemned these practices, and now legislative action is urgently needed.

Music streaming services also continue to pose challenges. While they open opportunities for wider access, the current model too often leaves platforms' operations unchecked and devalues creators' work in exchange for promotion of the platform itself or to the benefit of other players in the value chain. EU rules providing greater transparency, rules for promoting diverse and European works, and measures to combat fraudulent AI use are essential to ensure cultural diversity and that creators are fairly rewarded for their contributions.

Europe's cultural and creative industries contribute more than €650 billion annually to the EU economy and employ around 8 million people. Their sustainability is a matter of strategic importance for our culture, our economy, our competitiveness and sovereignty in the global digital age.

The Commission must act now to finish the work we've started. It is time to translate the Parliament's repeated calls into concrete measures that protect creators, promote fairness, and ensure that Europe remains a global leader on the cultural and creative scene.

Together, we can build on the progress made, ensuring the EU remains a global leader in supporting and protecting its creators.

Sincerely,



# MEET THE AUTHORS 2025







Thank You!

# GESAC ADVOCACY IN PERSON AND ONLINE

## Continuous Institutional Outreach

GESAC actively contributed to policy and legislative discussions by participating in parliamentary hearings and stakeholder dialogues, including providing experts and authors as speakers for sessions organized by EU institutions.

This outreach was coupled with regular dialogue with EU decision-makers through ongoing meetings with European Commission officials, member state permanent representations, and Members of the European Parliament, as well as targeted exchanges with parliamentary staff and committee administrators on key priorities

## Conference Participation and Thought Leadership

Throughout 2024, GESAC represented authors' interests at numerous international conferences, festivals, and policy events. The organisation served as a speaker at many high-profile gatherings across Brussels and EU member states, while attending additional events to maintain direct engagement with policymakers. These platforms provide critical opportunities to influence policy, build strategic alliances, and raise awareness about the value of creators' rights.



Below is a non-exhaustive list of events that GESAC participated in throughout the year.

### March

- GESAC participated as a speakers in the “Streaming Reform” session at the Music Moves Europe conference organised by the European Commission (DG EAC);

### April

- GESAC had a strong presence in multiple high-level copyright and AI-related events:
- GESAC attended the Copyright Conference organised by the Belgian Presidency of the EU in Namur, on “The Action of the EU and its Member States in Favour of Fair Remuneration for Authors, Performers and Creative Industries in the Digital Content Landscape”.
- GESAC participated in a roundtable hosted by MEP Axel Voss with stakeholders from the cultural, creative, and AI sectors to discuss the implementation of copyright and AI Act provisions
- GESAC was invited as a speaker by Creative Poland in Warsaw and the Hellenic Copyright Office in Athens
- SACEM’s David El Sayegh represented GESAC at a DG CONNECT workshop on the implementation of the text and data mining (TDM) right-reservation mechanism under the AI Act.

### May

- GESAC attended the first European AI Office webinar on ‘Risk management logic of the AI Act and related standards’ and a Belgian Presidency seminar on ‘working conditions for artists in Europe’.

### September

- PACOM Vice-Chair P. Rosset represented GESAC at the Music Moves Europe Structured Dialogue on fair remuneration in music streaming, held during the Reeperbahn Festival.
- GESAC attended the GPAI Code of Practice Kick-off Plenary organised by DG Connect

### October

- GESAC participated in the IMPF Forum in Mallorca moderating a panel on collective management.
- GESAC attended the Hungarian EU Presidency’s Conference on IP and AI
- GESAC participated, together with MEP Axel Voss and former MEP Iban García del Blanco in a panel on AI an copyright at BIME Festival in Bilbao and it also interviewed MEP Idoia Mendia on Buy Out and Music Streaming (see the [interview here](#) [🔗](#)).
- GESAC participated at EUIPO’s Plenary meeting

### November

- GESAC joined the ICMP's Music Minds event in Madrid
- GESAC participated in a panel discussion at the event on Privacy rules and AI organized by MLex in Paris.

### December

- GESAC participated in the Bydgoszcz Music Summit in Poland



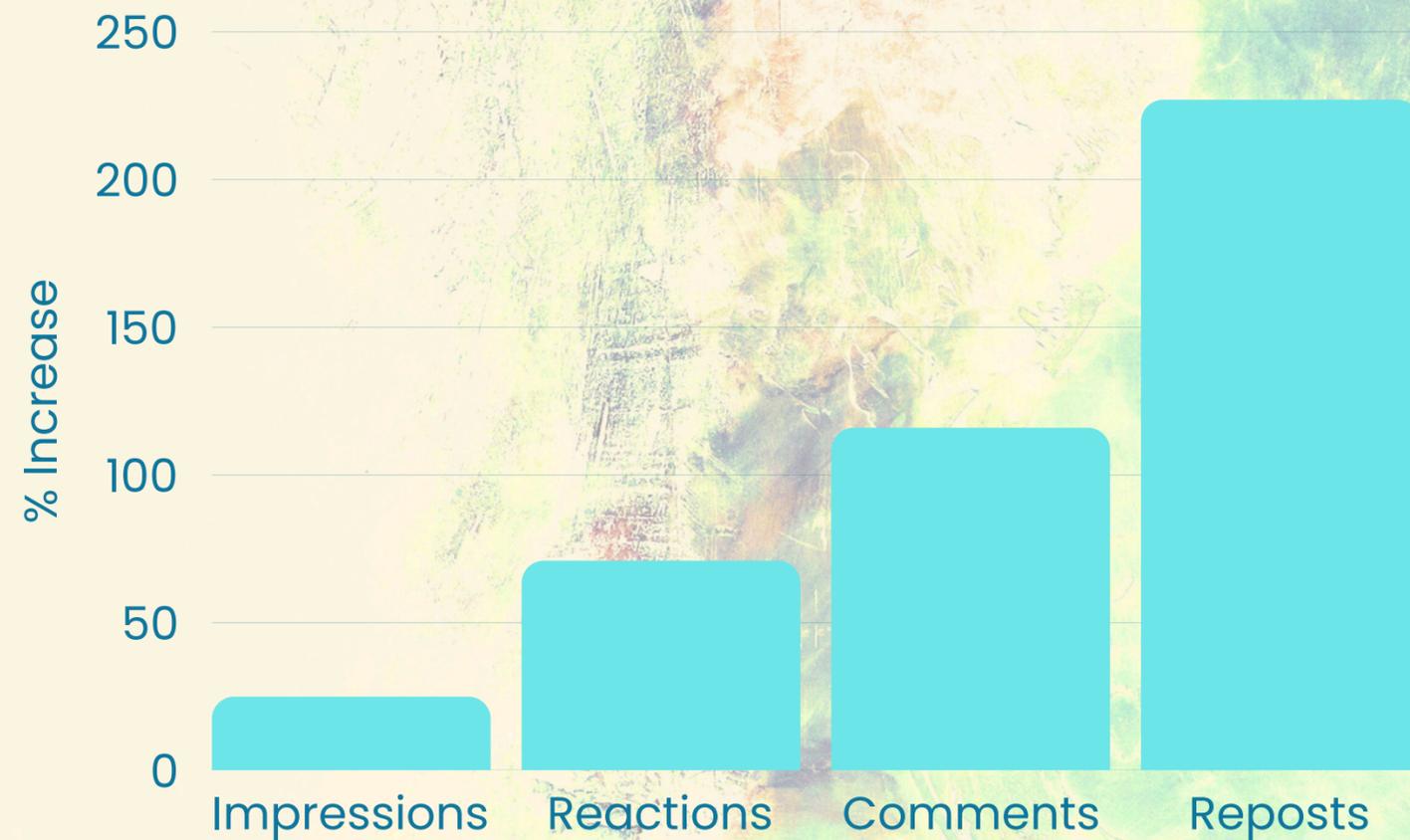
## GESAC online

Throughout the past year, GESAC's online presence, primarily on LinkedIn, has successfully broadened its reach to promote our policy positions, primarily on AI and streaming.

To better present GESAC and its priorities to newly elected and appointed policy makers, GESAC undertook a light social media campaign, featuring videos from GESAC members and staff, a brochure of GESAC priorities, visuals explaining those issues, and other communication material, with the help of a communications agency.

Our visibility and engagement metrics continue to grow, particularly amongst key target audiences such as policymakers and selected media titles.

### GESAC on LinkedIn over the past 6 months:



# ALAI EUROPEAN AUTHORS' RIGHT AWARD, SUPPORTED BY GESAC

*In 2018, GESAC joined forces with the Association Littéraire et Artistique Internationale (ALAI) to run an annual competition called the European Authors' Right Award.*

*The award serves as an incentive to inspire the next generation of copyright experts. The success and popularity of the award has served to bridge academia and practice, ensuring emerging legal scholars tackle real-world challenges faced by creators. By incentivising research on collective management and nurturing a pipeline of copyright specialists committed to creators' interests, the award ensures sustained advocacy, helping shape a fairer long-term ecosystem for authors.*

*The annual award is given to the writer of the best essay relating to authors' right. The essay should have a European dimension, include elements related to collective management, and be written by a researcher or student under 35 years old.*

*The jury for this edition of the award was chaired by Professor Frank Gotzen, President of ALAI and was comprised of two ALAI representatives: Paul Torremans, Professor of Intellectual Property Law (University of Nottingham) and Raquel Xalabarder, Professor of IP Law (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya) and two representatives of GESAC: Caroline Bonin, General Counsel at SACEM and Gábor Faludi, outside Counsel for Artisjus, Associate Professor ELTE Law School Civil Law Department.*



# ALAI EUROPEAN AUTHOR'S RIGHT AWARD

SUPPORTED BY **GESAC**

OPEN TO  
STUDENTS/  
RESEARCHERS  
AGED UNDER 35  
YEARS OLD

2024/2025  
EDITION

**APPLY NOW FOR THE 7TH EDITION OF  
THE AWARD!**

For application details,  
please visit [authorsocieties.eu/alai-award](https://authorsocieties.eu/alai-award)

**DEADLINE: 15 NOVEMBER 2024**



The 2023/2024 edition was awarded to Gaël Maupertuis for his essay "*Les copies hors ligne dans le streaming musical par abonnement : part du droit exclusif d'exploitation ou exception au droit d'auteur ?*". The title translates to English as "*Offline copies in subscription music streaming: part of the exclusive right of exploitation or an exception to copyright?*"



Mr. Gaël Maupertuis studies at Nantes University in France, where he is completing a second Master in Intellectual Property Law. He conducted his research under the supervision of Professor Agnès Lucas-Schloetter. His in-depth legal paper tackles the legal discussion on the nature of the offline copies made on subscription based streaming services, also known as 'tethered downloads'.

These allow users to access music without an internet connection – but they involve making actual copies of songs, albeit temporary, which can last as long as the time of subscription, and access-restricted, i.e. only during the subscription to the specific service.

The author raises key questions:

- Are these offline copies covered by exclusive right of reproduction subject to licensing?
- Or could they fall under any exceptions, in particular "private copying"?

The essay is available to [read here](#)  (in French)

# GESAC OPERATIONAL INSIGHTS

## General Assembly

GESAC members gathered in May in Brussels for their statutory General Assembly, when elections were also held for its Board and the President for the 2024-2026 mandate. The assembly allowed for exchange and discussions on the organisation's achievements over the preceding year and the setting of strategic priorities for the future. The secretariat shared updates on policy developments, engagement with EU institutions and stakeholders. The 2023 annual report and closed accounts as reviewed by KPMG were also approved during the meeting

On the evening of May 22<sup>nd</sup>, a farewell party was organised for Véronique that gathered more than 60 people from the GESAC membership and from the Brussels bubble. A fitting and well-deserved tribute for decades of dedication and exceptional service to our community. A gallery of photos from the evening can be viewed [here](#).

An online GESAC General Meeting was also held on the 27<sup>th</sup> of November with the participation of representatives of the EU Hungarian Presidency as well as Mr. Giuseppe Abbamonte from DG Connect.



# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The GESAC Board met four times in 2024; online on 23 January 2024, in Brussels on 22 May and 24 September, and online on 27 November.

A key moment for leadership and succession planning, the September board meeting was the first with Adriana as the General Manager and the newly elected Presidents and members. This was also the first meeting with the new legislature in place representing a new term of EU policy making. The Secretariat presented a comprehensive analysis of emerging political trends and institutional priorities shaping the new EU term, informed by extensive engagement with policymakers and stakeholders both in Brussels and Strasbourg. This included a detailed breakdown of the European Parliament's and Commission's agendas, alongside an assessment of GESAC's priority files and their current status in policy making.

## GESAC Board 2024 – 2026 mandate

Mr David El Sayegh, Deputy CEO of SACEM (France) was elected as the President of GESAC and will chair the GESAC Board. Mr Gernot Graninger, CEO of AKM/Austromechna (Austria), Mr Victor Finn, CEO of IMRO (Ireland), and Mr András Szinger, CEO of Artisjus (Hungary) were elected as the Vice-Presidents and Mrs Cristina Perpiñá-Robert Navarro, CEO of SGAE (Spain), Mrs Laura Baškevičienė, CEO of Latga (Lithuania), Mr Tobias Holzmüller, CEO of GEMA (Germany), Mr Risto Salminen, CEO of TEOSTO (Finland) and Mr José Jorge Letria, President of SPA (Portugal) were elected as members of the Board.



**David El Sayegh**  
President of the Board  
DEPUTY CEO OF SACEM [FRANCE]



**Victor Finn**  
Vice-President  
CEO OF IMRO [IRELAND]



**Gernot Graninger**  
Vice-President  
CEO OF AKM AND AUSTRO  
MECHANA [AUSTRIA]



**András Szinger**  
Vice-President  
CEO OF ARTISJUS [HUNGARY] CEO OF LATGA [LITHUANIA]



**Laura Baškevičienė**  
Member  
CEO OF GEMA [GERMANY]



**Tobias Holzmüller**  
Member  
PRESIDENT AND CEO OF  
SPAUTORES [PORTUGAL]



**José Jorge Letria**  
Member  
CEO OF SGAE [SPAIN]



**Cristina Perpiñá-Robert  
Navarro**  
Member



**Risto Salminen**  
Member  
CEO OF TEOSTO [FINLAND]

## MADRID GROUP

The Madrid Group acts as GESAC's legal committee, bringing together legal experts from member societies across Europe. These professionals usually lead the legal departments within their organisations and are frequently engaged in regulatory affairs. The group plays a vital role in shaping and reviewing GESAC's position papers, responses to public consultations, and contributions to legislative proposals and other policy initiatives at the EU level. All GESAC members are welcome to participate, with contributions made on a voluntary basis.

The Madrid Group met 3 times in 2024; online on 8 February, in Brussels on 11 April 2024 at GEMA Brussels office, and online on 4 December

The Madrid Group is chaired by Ms Caroline Bonin of SACEM, with Mr. Gabor Faludi of ARTISJUS as Vice-Chair. Member associations represented on the Madrid Group in 2024:

**AKM • BUMA • GEMA • KODA • OSA • SABAM • SCAM • SGAE • SIAE • SOZA • STIM • TEOSTO • TONO • ZAIKS**

## PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE (PACOM)

PACOM gathers experts in Public Affairs and Communication to discuss strategic advocacy, policy alignment, and EU legislative developments and any resulting external outreach. The committee met 3 times in 2024 (19 March, 8 October, and 27 November).

This year's meetings facilitated strategic exchanges on how GESAC's community could amplify its advocacy in alignment with the EU's 2024-2029 agenda, focusing on pre- and post-election actions to shape policies impacting creators. Members shared critical insights into national developments, including pre-election debates on culture, emerging political trends, and grassroots initiatives by the cultural/creative sector (e.g., campaigns for fair streaming remuneration and AI safeguards).

The PACOM group were also instrumental in the success of this year's 'Meet the Authors' event, providing input to the programme, logistical support and ensuring the attendance of key figures.

# GESAC SECRETARIAT



Adriana Moscoso del Prado  
General Manager



Burak Özgen  
Deputy General Manager



Alexia Pickard  
EU Public Affairs Lead



Catherine Navet  
Office Manager



Seán Kerrigan  
Communications Adviser

The past year saw significant personnel changes at the GESAC secretariat. Following Véronique Desbrosses retirement in June, Adriana Moscoso Del Prado was announced as the new General Manager taking up her position in August. At this time, Burak Özgen was promoted to Deputy General Manager, leveraging his extensive legal expertise and EU lobbying experience. In February of 2025 the team was joined by Seán Kerrigan, who brings over 10 years of Brussels advocacy communications experience to the role of Communications Adviser.



**THANK YOU**

 <https://authorsocieties.eu>

 [secretariatgeneral@gesac.org](mailto:secretariatgeneral@gesac.org)

 (32-2) 511.44.54

 [GESAC - authorsocieties.eu](https://www.linkedin.com/company/gesac-authorsocieties.eu)

Registered Office and General Secretariat  
23, Rue Montoyer – 1000 Bruxelles

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