

Activity report of the year 2016

by the Executive Committee and FSE staff.

2016 IN BRIEF

- A new Executive Committee in action ;
- First European Screenwriters Award (Sept. 2015)
- Three board meetings (Brussels, Paris) ;
- Meetings with EU Commissioners Oettinger and Navracsics ;
- Eighteen visits to Brussels by Executive Officer for meetings ;
- FSE co-signed several statements and letters related to EU policies (fair remuneration for Authors, EU Copyright Directive, portability, geoblocking...) ;
- FSE partner of the meeting « Authors and Consumers in Dialogue », Brussels, 27 January ;
- FSE partner of the Creators Conference, Brussels, 31 May 2016 ;
- FSE organised an informal meeting for guilds, Brussels, 1 June 2016 ;
- FSE Executive Officer was invited by other creators' organisations to speak at meetings ;
- Preparation of the 4th World Conference of Screenwriters in Paris, in partnership with IAWG and the Guilde Française des Scénaristes (cancelled),
- Joint FSE/Uni-Mei application to DG Employment for a project on collective bargaining (rejected by the Commission),
- Organisation of a IAWG/FSE/Guilde Française des Scénaristes joint meeting in Paris (19 October),
- FSE annual general assembly in Paris (20-21 October),
- New subsidies (LIRA and deAuteurs for the Creators Conference, Kopinor for the new website)

PRESENTATION OF FSE FOR NEWCOMERS

FSE is a European network of national and regional associations, guilds and unions of writers working for film, television and new media in Europe. It was created in June 2001 to respond to growing globalisation of the audiovisual industry, rapid development of the digital market and an increasing volume of European Union legislation. In 2016, FSE comprises 23 member guilds from 18 countries, representing more than 6,000 affiliated professional screenwriters in Europe. European screenwriters are the originators of the stories that create 1.2 million jobs in the audiovisual industries in Europe and an economic value of 107.3 billion euros (source : EY-Creating Growth-Measuring Cultural and Creative Markets in the EU, Dec. 2014).

The **main objectives of FSE** are :

- 1) promoting improvement in creators' basic contracts by campaigning for standard minimum contract terms, decided through collective bargaining, guaranteed by law ; for fair remuneration, for sharing in the economic life of what screenwriters create ; for the respect of their property/copyright/droit d'auteur ; and against buy-out contracts.
- 2) seeking to influence the review of the copyright acquis by the European Commission by increasing the presence of screenwriters in the debate in the institutions of the European Union.
- 3) supporting national guilds by providing them with information on EU policies, meetings to exchange information and experiences and debate on the new challenges of the profession of screenwriter, workshops to develop skills in campaigning and bargaining at national level, and encourage guilds to cooperate.
- 4) constructive dialogue with the other creative forces of the audiovisual sector and
- 5) support for cultural diversity.

These objectives are described in details in several documents :

- the Three-Year Plan 2015-2018 : http://www.scenaristes.org/pdfs/fse%203y%20plan%202015_2018.pdf
- the Statutes : http://www.scenaristes.org/pdfs/2015%20FSE%20statutes%20DEF_en.pdf
- the Founding charter : http://www.scenaristes.org/pdfs/fse_foundingcharter2.pdf
- the Screenwriters Manifesto : <http://www.scenaristes.org/manifesto.htm>

The **main activities of FSE** consist in :

- 1) monitoring EU policies and working with other creators' organisations to defend the position of creators at the institutions of the European Union (meetings with Commissioners and MEPs, co-signed statements and letters, replies to public consultations, joint events).
- 2) organising events to allow national guilds to meet, exchange and cooperate, at the Annual General Assemblies and the World Conferences of Screenwriters (organised in partnership with the International Affiliation of Writers Guild (IAWG). Previous editions : Warsaw, 2014 ; Barcelona, 2012 ; Athens, 2009). FSE initiated the FSE European Screenwriters Award to cast light on screenwriters (First edition in September 2015, Brussels. Next edition in 2017). FSE carried out a series of training workshops for its member guilds on collective bargaining, in cooperation with UNI-Europa (funded by DG Employment, in 2013).
- 3) FSE publishes leaflets to support its campaigns on remuneration and better contracts :

European Screenwriters Income in 2012 : An Overview

<http://www.scenaristes.org/pdfs/somebody%20wrote%20it%20web.pdf>

Somebody Wrote It

<http://www.scenaristes.org/pdfs/fseleafletremunerationweb.pdf>

FSE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The current Executive Committee is composed of:

- Robert Taylor (President)
- Carolin Otto (Vice-President)
- Monica Boracco (Treasurer)
- Jean-André Yerlès (Member)
- Maciej Karpinski (Member)

Their two year mandate will last until the next annual general assembly (Autumn 2017).

The Executive Committee met three times and regularly exchanged by email and skype.

- Brussels on 18 and 19 January 2016
- Paris on 30 May 2016
- Brussels on 20 September 2016

The minutes of these meetings are available [here](#):

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/7vrp5a3g09t64cz/AABB9nj4l9WYs2_WnV69zZOa?dl=0

FSE EVENTS

Meeting with consumers , Brussels, 27 January 2016

On the occasion of the event "Authors and Consumers in Dialogue" hosted by MEP Pavel Svoboda at the European Parliament on January 27, FSE invited German screenwriter Jochen Greve to give the point of view of a creator and speak of his creative work and remuneration in the online environment. Jochen Greve has been very committed to FSE for many years and is also Patron of SAA (Society of Audiovisual Authors). This event was jointly organised by the Authors' Group (FERA – European Federation of Audiovisual Directors, ECSA - European Composer and Songwriter Alliance, European Federation of Journalists (EFJ), European Writers' Council, FSE and BEUC (The European Consumer Organisation).

Among the issues discussed were :

- freedom of expression and right to access information and culture in the online environment
- the copyright value chain – where does the consumers' money go?
- the future of creativity and the consumer as future author

Creators Conference, Brussels, 31 May 2016

« Towards a Modern, more European Copyright Framework and the Necessity of Fair Contracts for Creators ». The event was organised by ECSA, the European Composer and Songwriter Alliance, in alliance with FSE (screenwriters), EFJ (journalists), EWC (writers) and FERA (directors). The initiative aims at creating a forum for authors, politicians, industry stakeholders and all interested parties to meet and discuss key issues related to author's rights, freedom of expression and the EU digital single market.

We encourage you to have a glance at the following documents :

- **The joint press release** : <http://composeralliance.org/creators-conference-2016/>
- **The Authors' group's Declaration** : http://composeralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/CC_declaration.pdf
- **EU Commissioner Ansip's keynote** : https://ec.europa.eu/commission/2014-2019/ansip/announcements/speech-vice-president-ansip-creators-conference_en

SAA/FERA/FSE workshop, Brussels, 19 Septembre 2016

Since several years, board members and general secretaries of SAA (Society of Audiovisual Authors), FERA (European Federation of Film Directors) and FSE are meeting once a year in Brussels to exchange views on EU policies and seek possible collaborations. Robert Taylor, David Kavanagh and Amélie Clément attended the workshop in Brussels on 19 Septembre.

IAWG Annual General Meeting, Paris, 17-18 October 2016

Several FSE guilds (France, Germany, Ireland and UK) are also members of IAWG (the International Affiliation of Writers Guild) and attended the annual general meeting. FSE (as observer) was represented by President Robert Taylor. For the first time FSE member guild ALMA (Spain) attended the meeting as observer. The International Affiliation of Writers Guild “was established in 1986 to address the globalization of the entertainment industry and improve the working conditions of professional film and television writers worldwide through collective action, mutual support and common representation internationally. Its member guilds work on behalf of 50,000 writers in the areas of collective bargaining, standard contracts, credit disputes, government lobbying, and the promotion of the essential role of the writer as first creator in the filmmaking process.”

More on IAWG: <http://iawg.org/>

FSE/IAWG/La Guilde Joint Meeting, Paris, 19 October 2016

Despite the cancellation of the 4th World Conference of Screenwriters, IAWG and FSE have decided to maintain the organisation of their annual meetings in Paris and proposed a one-day joint meeting, in partnership with La Guilde Française des Scénaristes.

The programme is available [here](#):

FSE Annual general assembly, Paris, 20-21 October 2016

Around 35 representatives of FSE member guilds are going to meet in Paris for the FSE annual general assembly. The agenda is available [here](#).

OTHER FSE PROJECTS

The World Conference of Screenwriters

FSE was engaged, together with IAWG and the French Guild of Screenwriters, in the preparation of the 4th edition of the World Conference of Screenwriters (WCOS 04). The French guild had proposed at the FSE AGM in Warsaw in 2014 to host WCOS 04, a proposal approved by the general assembly and IAWG. Unfortunately, the partners of the event had to make the difficult decision to cancel the conference, due to the lack of financial resources.

Collective Bargaining

FSE staff worked hard to submit an application jointly with UNI-Mei for the call for proposals “INFORMATION AND TRAINING MEASURES FOR WORKERS' ORGANISATIONS” of DG Employment. FSE presented a project titled “Collective bargaining for creators in the new European digital market – new strategies and tools”.

The project consisted in providing an exchange of knowledge and information to inform negotiators (develop existing skills to a broader pan-European level) and a context in which to develop new tools for negotiation. The main objectives were:

- Information exchange, debate and discussion on the current state of collective bargaining for screenwriters in Europe,
- Analysis of the developing online market place for cultural goods and services,
- Developing strategies for negotiation of collective agreements in this evolving market place,
- Undertaking a review of the current situation of screenwriters' remuneration by conducting and publishing an online study,
- Developing and establishing an online comparative database of contract terms and conditions across eighteen member states in the form of a Wiki, allowing a certain degree of ongoing amendment and updating of the information by participants and facilitating online, ongoing discussion forums.

The detailed work programme is available [here](#).

https://www.dropbox.com/s/afbsrlrmllycxco/10_%20DG%20Emp%20application.pdf?dl=0

Despite the successful application under the same budget line in 2013, our confidence that we had presented a good project and the rather optimistic pronostic of Uni-Mei, the Commission rejected our application and explained the reasons in a letter received in October. It seems that the key reason is the too weak financial capacity of FSE. Besides, the Commission stresses that the project is not enough linked to the EU social dialogue process (limited to the social dialogue committees, not considering the other forms of relations between employers and workers organisations), and that our “dissemination” is not strategic and wide enough. Johannes Studinger believes that we can improve these two last aspects for a future joint application, providing FSE becomes a strong financial partner according to the Commission's criteria...

FSE AWARD 2017

Following the success of the first edition of the FSE Award ceremony of 21 Septembre 2015 in Brussels, the Executive Committee has decided to organise a second edition in 2017. FSE will start preparing this next edition before the end of 2016: programme, venue, applications for subsidies, plan for communication, etc.

FSE LOBBYING

In general, FSE has increased its visibility in Brussels. The issues on which FSE is campaigning are detailed in a report written by David Kavanagh, available at the meeting in Paris.

Lobbying groups

FSE is part of several groups of organisations and FSE Executive Officer David Kavanagh attended regular meetings in Brussels :

- **The Creators' meetings** gather representatives of FSE, ECSA (European Composer & Songwriter Alliance), SAA (Society of Audiovisual Authors, a European federation of collective management organisations), GESAC (European Authors' Societies), AEPO-ARTIS (Association of European Performers' Organisations), IFJ (International Federation of Journalists), Uni-Mei (International Arts and Entertainment Alliance), EWC (European Writers Council), FIM (International Federation of Musicians), FERA (Federation of European Film Directors), FIA (International Federation of Actors) and EVA (European Visual Artists).
- FSE is a member of **Creativity Works! (CW)**, a coalition of “like-minded organisations, federations and associations from the European cultural and creative sectors”. Read more [here](#) on this coalition.
- **The Authors' Group** represents more than 500 000 authors, including composers, film directors, journalists, literary translators, songwriters, screenwriters and writers in Europe. Members of the Group are ECSA (European Composer & Songwriter Alliance), EFJ (European Federation of Journalists), EWC (European Writers' Council), FERA (Federation of Film Directors in Europe) and FSE (Federation of Screenwriters Europe). The Authors' Group's main objective is to ensure that the voice of authors is taken into account in the framework of the modernisation of EU copyright rules, particularly with regards to fair contractual conditions for authors and fair remuneration for the exploitation of copyright protected works. This group co-organised the Creators Conference in Brussels on 31 June 2015, issued joint statements and regularly met in Brussels. The bi-lateral collaboration between these organisations is also increasing. David Kavanagh was invited to speak at the General Assemblies of ECSA and FERA.
This group was the catalyst for the inclusion in the new Directive on Copyright in the Digital Single Market of provisions in respect of Fair Contracts.

Joint statements

- ➔ FSE co-signed a statement on **portability** with the Audiovisual Sector Coalition, following the European Commission's proposal on ensuring the cross-border portability of online content services in the internal market. Read [here](#).
- ➔ FSE also co-signed a statement on **geoblocking**, together with the Audiovisual Sector Coalition to answer the « Public consultation on Geo-Blocking and Other Geographically-Based Restrictions When Shopping and Accessing Information in the EU ». Read [here](#).
- ➔ FSE co-signed with 15 other signatories a statement on the **Status of online platforms in relation to copyright**, addressed to the President of the European Commission and several commissioners. Read [here](#).

- SAA (Society of Audiovisual Authors), FERA (Federation of European Film Directors), FSE (Federation of Screenwriters in Europe) and GESAC (European Grouping of Societies of Authors and Composers) have collaborated to address **a letter to the European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker on « Fair remuneration of audiovisual authors »**. This letter has also been sent to Vice-President Ansip and Commissioners Oettinger, Navracsics, Bienkowska and Vestager. Read [here](#).
- FSE has formally endorsed the Society of Audiovisual Authors (SAA – a federation of audio-visual collecting societies)'s proposal for a **non-waivable right to equitable remuneration for the use of your work online**. This campaign is explained in the SAA White Paper on Audiovisual Authors' Rights and Remuneration in Europe. You can download the leaflet [here](#).
- FSE has also recently signed up to an analysis proposed by GESAC by being signatory to letters which supported GESAC's campaign on the concept of **transfer of value**. GESAC (a different group of collecting societies, mostly from the music sector) addresses the transfer of value that results from the fact that online platforms are making money by not paying authors, meaning that our value is being transferred to them. Read the full brochure *Use of cultural content online – transfer of value* [here](#).
- FSE has co-signed the **Authors' Group statement on EC copyright package** STATEMENT FROM THE AUTHORS' GROUP ON the European Commission's proposal for Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on "Copyright in the Digital Single Market". Read [here](#).

Lobbying meetings

- **Authors and artists (Carolin Otto, Jochen Greve) met Commissioner Oettinger in Berlin on the occasion of the Berlinale**. "Authors and performers need a strong contract law to enforce their interests." Read article (in German) [here](#). Carolin Otto spoke also in the name of FSE.
- **FSE met EU Commissioner Oettinger**
On 2nd March 2016 FSE President Robert Taylor participated in a constructive meeting of several representatives of the Authors' group with EU Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society Oettinger.
- **FSE met EU Commissioner Tibor Navracsics**
FSE Executive Officer David Kavanagh met European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport Tibor Navracsics in Brussels on 2nd May 2016 to address the need of fair remuneration for authors, together with the other partners of the Authors' Group. Read the report of this high-level meeting that ECSA published in its [newsletter](#).

FSE COMMUNICATION

Newsletters

FSE sent three newsletters to its member guilds in 2016.

- Issue February 2016
- Issue April 2016
- Issue July 2016

These newsletters are available [here](#).

Another newsletter will be sent before the end of 2016.

Social networks

Follow FSE on **FACEBOOK** (947 followers)

www.facebook.com/screenwriterseurope

Follow FSE on **TWITTER** (445 followers)

@ScreenwritersEU

Follow-up FSE Award

deAuteurs, a Flemish speaking Belgian collecting society, has published a newsletter with an interview (translated in dutch) of Adam Price (Borgen), winner of the FSE European Screenwriter Award in Brussels on 21 Septembre 2015. deAuteurs was one of the partners of the event. Read the newsletter [here](#).

Before FSE can afford a brand new website, you can still download *Somebody Wrote It*, the publication which FSE launched on the occasion of the FSE European Screenwriters Award in Brussels on 21st September 2015. This publication includes a document on better contracts prepared by FSE with the Federation of European Film Directors (FERA), « Creators' remuneration, a problem at the heart of copyright ». This document is now also available in Spanish and Bulgarian.

in English : <http://www.scenaristes.org/pdfs/somebody%20wrote%20it%20web.pdf>

in Spanish : <http://www.sindicatoalma.es/sites/default/files/BETTER%20CONTRACTS%20SPANISH-definitivo.pdf>

In Bulgarian : https://www.dropbox.com/s/hglqoe3ahr47tv/better_contracts_Bulgarian.pdf?dl=0

FSE website

The current FSE website has been created many years ago without any financial support, by one member guild based in UK (WGGB). The website is still hosted by a UK company at non-competitive costs. The FSE team has managed, despite lack of resources to contract the services of a professional webmaster, to slightly update the website year after year. The content management system has never been upgraded and for technical reasons it has become now impossible for FSE team to make any more updates without being a master in html.

Thanks to the advice and intermediary of **Monica Boracco**, FSE asked **Kopinor Development Fund** (Norway) to support financially the creation of a more mature, more professional, up to date and up to taste online presence. Our application has been successful and FSE received 3680 euros to create a new website.

Read [here](#) for more details on the project.

FSE thanks **Gail Renard** for her contribution with ideas of making short films to get our messages across (these proposals will be taken into account for the preparation of the new website and the communication plan for the FSE Award 2017).

NEWS FROM FSE OFFICE IN BRUSSELS

Brussels Office and staff

FSE benefits from the continuing and strong support from UNI-Mei (Johannes Studinger). UNI-Mei has offered FSE to share its office. FSE can also use meeting rooms facilities. FSE pays no rent.

The staff is currently composed of :

- Amélie Clément, part-time free-lance FSE manager (Tours/Brussels)
- David Kavanagh, part-time free-lance FSE Executive Officer (Dublin/Brussels)

Both are under contract until the end of 2016.

Due to financial restrictions they both had to reduce their working time and consequently their remuneration, though a temporary improvement of FSE finances (new Partner Members) had allowed them to dedicate more time to FSE during the year 2015.

Finances

As a consequence of the adoption of the new statutes (available [here](#)), in which it says that FSE must hold its annual general assemblies in Autumn each year (the idea was to match the dates with those of the world conferences of screenwriters), FSE had to change its financial year. As a matter of fact, the annual accounts must be approved by the general assembly with 6 months following the end of the financial year. FSE annual accounts will now cover a financial period from July to June. FSE commissioned an accountant to supervise the financial situation of the intermediary period (from 1st January 2015 to 30 June 2016) and establish the balance sheet (situation on 30 June 2016).

The financial accounts are available [here](#).

The balance sheet is available [here](#).

The result is a deficit of 7400 euros (on 30 June 2016).

The financial situation of FSE is still very fragile. The main income comes from annual membership fees from guilds and partner members (SACD, DAMA and SGAE). FSE has managed to get ad hoc subsidies from several CMOs for projects (LIRA and deAuteurs for the Creators Conference, Kopinor for the new website), however these subsidies do not help FSE structurally (as writing applications requires a lot of work and the money has to be spent on related projects).

FSE will invoice guilds for their annual membership fee 2017 after the annual general assembly in Paris.

FSE thanks WGGB for its long term loan of 5000 euros, at a moment when FSE was facing cash flow difficulties.

Guilds which have a rather comfortable financial situation are welcome to make an exceptional contribution to FSE to help cover the deficit.

The Executive Committee is thinking of updating the membership fee scheme (FSE member guilds are currently paying a fee according to their number of individual members). A proposal will be made at the next general assembly.

FSE MEMBER GUILDS

Full members

In 2016 FSE counts 23 member guilds in 18 countries. The Screenwriters Guild of Turkey (SENDER) has unfortunately not managed to pay its membership fees for many years and is no longer member of FSE.

FSE representatives

Guilds' representatives have a key role in the good functioning of FSE as a European network of screenwriters. For example, they speak at the FSE meetings in the name of their guild; they receive and reply to e-mails coming from the FSE; they contribute to surveys and queries coming from FSE or other member guilds; they inform FSE on the activities of their guild and they report to their board, staff and individual members on the activities and debates going on at FSE.

FSE needs to update its list of contacts, to continue to communicate efficiently with its member guilds. Since staff members and boards of many guilds are regularly changing, it is important that guilds keep FSE informed of any change.

The most recent list of contacts is available [here](#).

Partner Members

In 2014 the Executive Committee of FSE proposed to the general assembly to create a new category of members, the Partner Members, with two objectives :

- 1) associate national collective management organisations (CMOs) to the work that FSE is developing at European level to « increase the presence of screenwriters in the debate in the institutions of the European Union on the future of copyright »,
- 2) increase financial resources to help FSE implement its policy plan 2015-2018.

FSE revised its statutes to formalise the creation of this new category of membership and revised its policy plan for the years 2015-2016-2017. FSE and national guilds joint forces to approach national CMOs, presenting a document called « Become a member of the FSE » (available [here](#)).

Three CMOs have decided to become partner members : SACD (France), SGAE and DAMA (Spain) for a three year period.

At the beginning of 2016, FSE sent an “Annual Report of Activities for the Year 2015” to these three Partner Members to assess the progress made during 2015 partly thanks to their financial contribution. This report is available [here](#). A similar report will be produced for the year 2016.

These three organisations have been engaged in FSE for a three year period (until end 2017). It is important to encourage them to renew their interest in FSE and their crucial financial support. The French and Spanish guilds will be invited to help FSE ensuring the continuity of these partnerships.

Though only three collective management organisations have joined FSE after an active recruiting campaign, the Executive Committee believes that Partner Members are still a great opportunity for FSE to consolidate its means of action on the long term. FSE intends to launch a new attempt at recruiting partner members. FSE has invited WGA West to become partner members (an answer is expected before the end of the year). Guilds which have a good relationship with their national collective management organisations are strongly encouraged to contact FSE to coordinate a new approach.

Prospecting New Members

FSE has not been proactive on this matter, partly due to lack of money, lack of time and lack of contacts. FSE has been contacted in May 2016 by SPID, Croatia's newly formed screenwriters association but got no answer to more recent contacts (FSE invited them to attend the meetings in Paris in October 2016). The new Screenwriters' section of the Directors Guild of Slovenia (member of FERA) is willing to become a Full FSE member from 2016. Their application will be presented at the FSE AGM in Paris. You can read the letter of application [here](#).

Guilds' reports

Each year FSE member guilds are invited to send a written report to share with FSE and other member guilds recent news (composition, achievements, activities, projects, etc.). The reports received for the year 2016 are available [here](#).
