

European Audiovisual Sector on the Future of the Creative Europe Programme 24 January 2019

As organisations working across the European audiovisual sector and **in light of the recent proposed amendments regarding the future of Creative Europe 2021-2027, we would like to reiterate our utmost support for the Creative Europe MEDIA Programme.**

There are, however, some points that we would like to address, which we fear could detract from the otherwise positive direction that discussions have been taking surrounding the future of the MEDIA sub-programme.

Beneficiaries

We are concerned that an absence of clarification on which kinds of audiovisual content would be covered by the MEDIA strand of the Creative Europe Programme constitutes a risk that non-professional/UGC content may have access to European funding. We do not believe this is the intention of the EU co-legislators, but that the goal is rather to guarantee that small and medium scale projects belonging to the industry would also remain eligible under the new Creative Europe Programme and its MEDIA Strand. We are naturally supportive of the latter. We therefore respectfully invite the co-legislators to reconsider amendments such as 23 and 46 and similar (“whether those activities are market or non-market oriented”; “engagement for proactive and legal use of and sharing user-generated content of audiovisual works across Europe and beyond”) as we fear the language proposed may lead to a wider range of content (that does not come from the industry) accessing EU funding than was actually intended.

The European Audiovisual Observatory (EAO)

We would like to highlight our strong support for the European Audiovisual Observatory, which, as part of the Council of Europe, provides facts, figures and analysis about Europe’s audiovisual industries, covering legal and economic aspects of interest to all Member States. The new Article 9 of the future Creative Europe Programme ensures this important organisation will continue to successfully provide these services for the period 2021-2027. We truly recommend preserving and embracing this article (and its fundamental principles) during future discussions and the set-up of compromise amendments, and for this reason, we strongly welcome amendment 423.

Budget

From a budgetary standpoint, we were particularly encouraged by the mention of a robust proposal for Creative Europe and the proportionate share of 58% earmarked for Creative Europe MEDIA in the European Parliament’s Draft Report¹. We firmly believe MEDIA’s allocation not only reflects the true value of the European audiovisual sector but also the need to ensure that the Programme is in a position to continue its wholesome and effective support mechanisms for the entire audiovisual value-chain, a sector that also significantly and positively impacts all other cultural value-chains.

With particular reference to amendments 397 and 399, we therefore call for this 58% allocation to be upheld, if not increased. This will reflect the sizeable investments made by the European audiovisual sector in the development, production, distribution, promotion and

¹ <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//NONSGML+COMPARL+PE-625.219+01+DOC+PDF+V0//EN&language=EN>

exhibition of films and other audiovisual productions, as well as the financial returns and reinvestment into the European economy that come as a result of the sector's success.

The European audiovisual sector is composed of high-risk industries that require significant amounts of pre-financing and depend on large amounts of marketing and promotion to very specific audiences in order to recoup initial investments. It is because of these structurally distinct characteristics that the sector requires dedicated support mechanisms. The budgetary percentage allocated to MEDIA will help address various challenges including, in a time of market transition, evolving business models, financing opportunities and revenue streams; it will also represent real added value to the contributions made through private investments from the European film and audiovisual sector.

Furthermore, the support for the audiovisual sector directly provides jobs for creatives from many other cultural domains. Film and audio-visual production, distribution and exhibition need people such as writers, composers, musicians, designers and architects, therefore a significant part of the abovementioned investments directly flows back to a number of different creative artists and technicians. Any reductions to the budgetary percentage of the Creative Europe Programme allocated to its MEDIA Strand would (most probably) require disproportionate compensation to be allocated to other cultural sectors in order to have a lasting effect.

Finally, any reduction of the budgetary percentage of the Creative Europe Programme allocated to its MEDIA Strand would undoubtedly be of great detriment to the significant achievements of the Creative Europe MEDIA Programme over the past 28 years and, in order for the industry to continue its upward trajectory, to further expand the potential for showcasing European cultural diversity and to maintain its reputation both at home and in global markets, it is crucial that MEDIA's share of the overall Creative Europe budget remains proportionate to its cultural, societal and economic value for Europe today.

We very much hope the above points prove useful ahead of the European Parliament vote on 20 February and would like to reiterate the sector's openness and commitment towards continuing the discussion in the interest of safeguarding the future prosperity of the European audiovisual sector and its far-reaching contributions to both European and national economies, employment, diversity and cultural identity.

Signatories

CEPI – The European Coordination of Independent Producers

EPC – The European Producers Club

Eurocinema – Association des producteurs de Cinéma et de Télévision

EUROPA CINEMAS – Réseau International de salles de cinéma pour la diffusion de films européens

Europa Distribution – European Network of Independent Film Distributors

Europa International – European Network for Sales Agents

EFP – European Film Promotion

FIAD – International Federation of Film Distributors' Associations

FIAPF – International Federation of Film Producers' Associations

IVF – International Video Federation

MEDIAPRO – Mediaproducción

UNIC - The International Union of Cinemas

Signatories

