



## **Projecting Progress: How best to cultivate and grow audiences in a dynamic and diverse film landscape**

*Cannes, 20<sup>th</sup> May 2023* – Key players reiterate their commitment to the art of cinema, its unique magic and power to move audiences by stimulating their curiosity and exploring other realities, emotions and concepts.

Brussels-based professional associations of the film business sector in Europe representing producers, distributors, off-line and online video publishers and cinema operators hosted a seminar on Saturday 20th May, 2023, exploring how best to cultivate and grow audiences in a dynamic and diverse film landscape as part of the Cannes Film Market's industry programme.

At the crux of the debate was the shared view that current cinema admissions and box office revenues indicate strong demand for the theatrical experience and that the film industry must continue to work together to maintain this positive trend whilst also deploying efforts to engage with and reach new audiences. Speakers from across the film sector value chain offered perspectives on how the industry can continue to produce, distribute and exhibit – offline and online – films that meet consumer demand and offer new cinematographic experiences.

Central to this ambition is to recognize, embrace and promote the cultural diversity which is Europe's strength. Europe is not homogenous and for the film sector to build on its success, it will continue to reflect and respond to the diverse tastes and expectations of audiences across multiple territories. Each film has a unique production, distribution, and exhibition cycle – catering to its own DNA and reflecting the cultural diversity that is today's Europe.

Speakers concurred that the dynamism that characterizes the film industry in Europe is intertwined not only with the diversity of Europe but also the entrepreneurial spirit that runs throughout the sector, particularly evident this year at the 76<sup>th</sup> edition of the Festival de Cannes.

A uniting theme was the desire to secure a future film business ecosystem built not only on the imperatives of profitability and marketing but also on a common understanding of the value of cinema as an art form, a storytelling format loved by generations of audiences, a fundamental component of European culture and a valued industry creating economic value, jobs and skills, in particular for young people.

There was consensus that **the core concept to be promoted and defended** by European, national, and regional decision-makers remains freedom of choice to take risks on diverse stories and their production models together with varied, tailor-made promotion and distribution strategies, with cinemas as an essential part of the ecology. This is a critical factor for preserving the art of cinema and the plurality of the players involved in the creation, production, distribution, and exhibition of films in Europe.

- Freedom to produce, distribute and showcase new film stories in Europe. Cinema is the art of putting on screen stories that we did not know we wanted or needed, but which continue to move us, inform us, entertain us, opening windows on new worlds and shining a light on existing ones.
- Freedom to take artistic and economic risks, working together in an interconnected value chain, and to pursue business strategies compatible with the DNA of individual film sector players, whether small, medium, or large-sized companies or individuals.
- Freedom to deploy tailor-made business plans, including as regards financing and the path to meet future audiences, dependent on each individual film title and its specific requirements.
- Freedom to market, distribute and exhibit films territory by territory, audience by audience, according to local tastes, societal debates, and other preferences of each local and/or specific audience group.

Taken in combination, this constitutes an architectural framework that will support the film sector to continue making a significant contribution to the economy of, and employment in, Europe. It is essential for the European, national, and regional public authorities to uphold cinema as one of the most important democratic, cultural and civic tools for emancipation, dialogue and international influence.

The European film industry and its audiences deserve it.

**CEPI** - The European Audiovisual Production Association

**FIAD** - International Federation of Film Distributors' and Publishers' Associations

**FIAPF** - The International Federation of Film Producers Associations

**IVF** - The International Video Federation

**UNIC** - The International Union of Cinemas