



## Joint Statement by European Audiovisual Stakeholders

23 November 2024

### A Call to European Ministers of Culture:

#### Championing a thriving and diverse cultural future for Europe's film and audiovisual sector

Storytelling for the screen is a powerful part of European culture, rooted in its rich century-old cinema's history. Our film and audiovisual sector has always reflected Europe's cultural diversity and democratic values, contributing significantly to its global influence.

Its strength lies in this diversity, our authors' artistic freedom and the sustainability of local audiovisual ecosystems. National cultural policies and complementary EU measures – such as the protection of authors' and neighbouring rights in the digital age, fostering co-productions, development, distribution, continuous training of professionals, promotion of European works, and audience outreach through Creative Europe MEDIA – have been instrumental in allowing for the sector to thrive.

This support has enabled the creation and circulation of films and audiovisual works that enrich public debate and enhance the sector's international influence and outreach.

At the start of a new mandate for the European Commission, as we are encouraged by the commissioners-designate's strong support and positive messaging towards the audiovisual sector, we call on European Ministers of Culture to reaffirm their commitment to policies that promote Europe's unique cultural diversity while supporting local audiovisual ecosystems in a rapidly changing world, by upholding the following key objectives:

## **Putting artistic freedom and cultural diversity at the heart of European audiovisual policy**

Europe's strength lies in the rich tapestry of its cultures and creative voices. As global and technological shifts, including Artificial Intelligence, reshape the audiovisual landscape, we call on Ministers to support policies that prioritise artistic freedom and cultural diversity in the audiovisual sector, ensuring Europe's independent creators, creative workers and value chain mostly composed of micro-enterprises and SMEs can continue to create, produce, promote and bring diverse, authentic stories that resonate both locally and globally to various audiences.

## **Reinforcing Creative Europe MEDIA**

The MEDIA strand of the Creative Europe programme has been essential for audiovisual creative voices and independent local ecosystems to exist across Europe, by fostering cultural cooperation across the value chain, from co-production to distribution and circulation of audiovisual works to maximise their reach among European audiences. To maintain its crucial impact, we urge Ministers to support the programme's core cultural mission while advocating for additional, dedicated frameworks to address challenges faced by the wider media sector, or technological advancements such as AI and immersive media, without diverting MEDIA's cultural focus and resources.

## **Supporting Independent Creation and SMEs**

Independent filmmakers, authors, performers, creative workers, micro-enterprises and small and medium-sized production, distribution and sales companies form the backbone of Europe's film and audiovisual sector. We call for supportive legal and financing frameworks that amplify their ability to create, produce, distribute, publish and connect with audiences. This would ensure a dynamic and competitive ecosystem and benefit all Member States as well as the European Union as a whole.

## **Fostering transparent and inclusive dialogue to craft effective policies**

We call on Ministers to support structured, ongoing and transparent dialogue between the EU Commission and European stakeholders across the audiovisual value chain, ensuring that their voices are heard in policy decision-making.

The next five years will be critical for our sector to embrace innovation, while fostering the diverse creation and independent local audiovisual ecosystems that make Europe unique. We trust in your commitment to ensure that cultural diversity remains a central pillar of European audiovisual policymaking.

Signatories:

**ATC – Audiovisual Training Coalition**

**CEPI – European Coordination of Independent Producers**

**CICAE – International Confederation of Arthouse Cinemas**

**ECSA – European Composer and Songwriter Alliance**

**EUROKINEMA – Association de Producteurs de Cinéma et de Télévision**

**EuroFIA – European group of the International Federation of Actors**

**EUROPA DISTRIBUTION – European Network of Independent Film Publishers and Distributors**

**EUROPA INTERNATIONAL – European organization for films international distributors**

**FERA – Federation of European Screen Directors**

**FSE – Federation of Screenwriters in Europe**

**SAA – Society of Audiovisual Authors**

**UNI Europa**