

Commissioner Mariya Gabriel
European Commissioner for Digital Economy and Society
Commissioner Tibor Navracsics
European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport
Commissioner Günther Oettinger
European Commissioner for Budget & Human Resources
European Commission
Rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 200
1049 Brussels

7 September 2017

Dear Commissioner Gabriel, dear Commissioner Navracsics, dear Commissioner Oettinger,

Re: The Future of the Creative Europe MEDIA Sub-programme

As organisations working across the audiovisual sector in Europe, we are writing to you in the context of the mid-term review of the Creative Europe MEDIA sub-programme and the multiannual financial framework debate.

We are deeply concerned that the benefits of this important cultural and creative sub-programme will be undermined by budgetary constraints, which could be extremely counterproductive to small and medium audiovisual enterprises across Europe and to cross-border film distribution. We believe it is now more important than ever to strengthen the MEDIA programme, especially in light of the new digital challenges the sector is facing.

The MEDIA sub-programme is vital for the audiovisual industry and, since its launch in 1991, has supported its continuous evolution and promoted creative and fruitful collaborations across borders. Certain organisations and co-signatories of this letter were not only involved in the set-up of the Programme but are also considered founders of one of the best means of support for the European audiovisual industry over the past 26 years, during which MEDIA has invested over €2.4 billion in European content, creativity and cultural diversity, therefore assisting in the production of thousands of films, along with their international distribution and promotion.

MEDIA is deeply rooted in a diversified audiovisual sector and efficiently supports and promotes cultural diversity. It is also an essential partner in driving the competitiveness of the industry and has fostered growth and job creation. It has demonstrated its clear added value for the film and TV sector in Europe.

MEDIA celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2016 and its significant results over the years include:

- Supporting independent producers and small production companies in the development process, encouraging animation, creative documentaries, and fiction projects for theatrical release, television broadcasting and digital distribution;
- Helping authors in developing concepts and writing unique scripts which have resulted in successful TV dramas and/or films for theatrical release;
- Providing national film distributors with funding for marketing, printing and advertising, subtitling and dubbing, therefore supporting the acquisition of

- European non-national films and promoting the circulation of European content;
- Providing international sales companies with funding for the acquisition of European non-national films and their marketing;
 - Supporting the emergence of high-quality European productions and co-productions in both the film and TV sector;
 - Contributing towards the training of more than 20,000 skilled audiovisual professionals, enabling them to adapt to new challenges and technologies;
 - Boosting the circulation of European works in the European Union, exposing and promoting the best of European film across all distribution platforms (theatres, dvd, TV and online);
 - Promoting European works via film festivals and film markets in countries participating in the MEDIA Programme, as well as in third countries;
 - Developing transnational projects on film education, online distribution, festivals, professional training and innovative practices, which respond proactively to the digital revolution.

These impressive achievements show that the MEDIA sub-programme, thanks to its effective and tailored spending, has been of great benefit to the European audiovisual sector.

European audiovisual works showcase the true value of cultural exchange, particularly in the face of current challenges, and MEDIA has always played an integral role in the celebration and promotion of the rich variety of European cultural expression.

Furthermore, as said challenges are becoming more and more prevalent at both the national and European level, the value of MEDIA's support would only increase in terms of the continued ability of the sector to create works that reflect their time and provide windows into other cultures. The audiovisual sector will therefore need the continued support of the MEDIA programme more than ever, to encourage cultural curiosity and openness and to ensure a bright future for European film and TV.

We therefore call on your support to safeguard MEDIA and put forward an ambitious proposal that avoids any possible MEDIA budget cuts in the next programming period 2020-2027, as it is clear that such restrictions would negatively impact both Europe's cultural diversity and the economic growth of the European AV sector.

We very much look forward to hearing from you.

With kind regards,

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