

European Film Agency Directors
Cine-Regio
Capital Regions of Cinema

Common Declaration
on the new European culture agenda

The European Film Agency Directors, Cine-Regio and Capital Regions of Cinema welcome the European Commission's *Communication on a European agenda for culture in a globalised world*. This marks a turning-point and a fundamental first step in the development of a coherent policy approach towards culture.

The approach of the European Commission (EC) is reinforced by the conclusions of the Council of Ministers which recognise culture's role as a catalyst for growth, employment and competitiveness in the European Union (EU) and rightly insist on its specificity, in particular, on its dual nature, both cultural and economic. The Council has also affirmed that the cultural industries are anchored in local, regional and national contexts.

The European Film Agency Directors, Cine-Regio and Capital Regions of Cinema especially welcome three of the themes set out in the Culture Communication, namely:

- The support for evidence-based policy-making
- The setting up of a "Cultural Forum" of stakeholders to bring a cultural dimension to European public debates
- The strengthening by the EC of its internal coordination in order properly to reflect the interface between cultural diversity and other Community policies.

The importance of this last theme is amplified in the context of the review and possible revision of the 2001 Cinema Communication's guidelines for the public funding of film production.

That said, recent trends in the EC's interpretation of EU competition policy raise concerns. On the one hand, were the EC to move towards the automatic introduction of "cultural tests," it could lead to the adoption of a restrictive and reductive approach towards culture and film. On the other hand, although Europe's film professionals and the national and regional film funds have consistently stated that territorialisation plays a vital role in maintaining the fragile equilibrium in

both the film industry's structure and its public and private financing, the EC appears to retain a critical attitude towards "territorialisation clauses" contained in film support schemes.

Therefore, in keeping with the tenets of the UNESCO *Convention on the Promotion and Protection of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions 2005*, we would like to highlight to the EC two considerations:

- We have previously confirmed our satisfaction with the 2001 Cinema Communication guidelines. As Commissioner Reding acknowledged in December 2006 before the Culture Committee of the European Parliament, these have succeeded in reconciling Community competition principles with the right and duty of each Member State to implement cultural policies that help promote and develop European cultural diversity for film. Any new Communication on Cinema should therefore be no more restrictive than the 2001 Communication.
- It is vital to ensure that EU policies and legislation relating to the cultural and creative sectors, including film, be consistent and that they help to strengthen Europe's cultural richness. This would be in line with the Culture Communication which states that "the right balance needs to be struck between different legitimate public policy objectives, including the promotion of cultural diversity", and explicitly calls for "cultural considerations" to be taken into account when dealing with State aids in the audiovisual sector.

In conclusion, we, the directors of Europe's national and regional film agencies, reaffirm our responsibility for developing and implementing coherent national and regional cultural policies that are built on an appropriate application of the EU State aids regime.

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Signed by:

EFADs

Österreichisches Filminstitut (Austria)

Centre du Cinéma et de l'Audiovisuel de la Communauté française (Belgium)

Vlaams Audiovisueel Fonds (Belgium)

National Film Centre (Bulgaria)

Cultural Services of the Ministry of Education and Culture (Cyprus)

Czech Film Chamber (Czech Republic)

Danish Film Institute (Denmark)

Estonian Film Foundation (Estonia)
Filmförderungsanstalt (Germany)
Greek Film Centre (Greece)
Finnish Film Foundation (Finland)
Centre National de la Cinématographie (France)
National Film Office (Hungary)
Irish Film Board (Ireland)
Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali - Direzione Generale per il Cinema (Italy)
National Film Centre (Latvia)
Ministry of Culture - Department for Arts (Lithuania)
Film Fund Luxembourg (Luxembourg)
Maltese Film Commission (Malta)
Nederlands Fonds v.d. Film (Netherlands)
Ministry of Culture - Department for Cinema (Poland)
Instituto do Cinema Audiovisual e Multimedia (Portugal)
Centrul National al Cinematografiei (Romania)
Instituto de la Cinematografia y de las Artes Audiovisuales (Spain)
Ministry of Culture - Department for Cinema (Slovakia)
National Film Foundation (Slovenia)
Swedish Film Institut (Sweden)
UK Film Council (United Kingdom)

Cine-Regio, European Network of Regional Film Funds

Capital Regions of Cinema

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Commission du Film d'Ile de France
Madrid Film Commission
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