AgoraEU: Parliament committees strengthen support for European films and their audiences

On 19 November, the European Parliament's CULT and LIBE committees adopted their negotiation position on AgoraEU, the programme that will support European culture and media from 2028 to 2034. For those of us working to create European films and bring them to European audiences, today marks a positive outcome. The report advocates for much-needed continuity and stability of the Programme in its next chapter as AgoraEU. We thank co-rapporteurs Emma Rafowicz and Alice Kuhnke, and the members of both committees, for listening to the sector and for the quality of their work.

For more than three decades, the MEDIA programme has helped European films reach audiences beyond their home country, starting with cinemas. It has done so by supporting the whole film ecosystem, from film creators and film production to international film sales, film distribution, training, markets and festivals, and recognising the essential role of cinemas, including via the Europa Cinemas network.

By keeping MEDIA as a stand-alone strand within AgoraEU, the Committees preserve that continuity. Its objectives and calls would remain designed for an industry in which a film can take several years to go from development to release, and in which companies invest in acquisition, dubbing, subtitling and promotion, and infrastructure long before they know how a film will perform.

The Committees' vote confirming the European Parliament's initial ambitious overall budget of 10.7bn euro is welcome and represents an improvement over the most recent Council budget-cut proposal. The trialogue negotiations will now have to ensure that AgoraEU and the MEDIA strand have sufficient resources to fulfil their ambitions and provide predictable support to the sector throughout the 2028–2034 period.

The report also reinstated the international circulation of European films and the distribution of non-national European films in cinemas, alongside the online distribution of cinematographic works, among MEDIA's objectives. This wording is already part of the current Creative Europe regulation and has successfully guided the programme's calls for years. Keeping it in AgoraEU means that our calls for stability and continuity have been heard. The future work programmes will continue to be a cornerstone for the entire European film ecosystem, also thanks to the reintroduced annex we advocated for.

We particularly welcome the proposed introduction of the 'AgoraEU Dialogue Platform', bringing together the European Commission, the Council and the Parliament and fostering exchanges with stakeholders regarding the programme is also seen as a positive way to enhance cooperation and dialogues between stakeholders, beneficiaries and public institutions.

Our coalition also sees as a positive outcome the support provided to networks of European film professionals, including creators, producers, distributors, sales agents and cinema operators, fostering inter-professional collaboration, cooperation and mobility, as well as support for European audiovisual operators at industry events.

Our organisations advocated in favour of these points together throughout the process, and we are glad to see them reflected in the committees' text.

The committees' report gives the Parliament a strong basis for the next stages. Our organisations will continue to support this position and look forward to working with the Parliament, the Council and the Commission towards a programme that continues to bring European films to audiences across Europe, in cinemas and beyond.