

Joint PRESS RELEASE

The power of European Independent Film: CEPI and EPC bring together policy makers and independent producers in Strasbourg

Strasbourg, 8 October 2025

Today in Strasbourg, European policymakers and independent producers came together to discuss and defend the future of independent European film, TV and online production. At a time when Europe is rethinking its audiovisual policies, the discussion offered a timely reminder that independent producers are central to Europe's cultural sovereignty and creative competitiveness.

CEPI (European Audiovisual Production Association) and EPC (European Producers Club) co-hosted a breakfast discussion in the European Parliament entitled "*The Power of European Independent Film*", bringing together Members of the European Parliament and their teams, independent producers, and representatives from the European audiovisual sector to exchange views on major legislative developments shaping the future of Europe's creative industries.

Among the speakers were **European Parliament Vice-President Sabine Verheyen** (EPP, Germany), and **MEP Emma Rafowicz** (S&D, France), Rapporteur for AgoraEU in the CULT Committee. The breakfast also welcomed MEPs **Hannes Heide** (S&D, Austria), **Laurence Farreng** (Renew, France), **Brigitte van den Berg (Renew, The Netherlands)**, **Diana Riba i Giner (Greens, Spain)** and **Marcos Ros Sempere** (S&D, Spain), alongside producers of LUX Audience Award-selected films, including **Nicolas Sanfaute** and **Raphaëlle Delauche** (Love Me Tender). Their presence illustrated the strong connection between European policy and the creative community it supports.

The event highlighted the crucial role of independent producers in driving cultural diversity, economic growth, and democratic values in Europe's audiovisual landscape. "*Independent producers are passionate creative leaders*," said **James Hickey EPC General Counsel on behalf of both CEPI**



James Hickey's introduction speeches

"In a context of growing market concentration and global competition, Europe needs to safeguard independence if we want to preserve creative freedom, cultural diversity and sovereignty," added **CEPI Board member Emmanuelle Mauger**.

➔The discussion focused on three key policy areas

- **AgoraEU Proposal:** CEPI and EPC recalled that the MEDIA Programme was a major EU success story for 35 years, and that it now risks losing its identity in the proposed Media+ within AgoraEU. It is now being diluted, without a dedicated budget. It does not refer specifically to independent producers anymore. This could undermine decades of EU support for creative diversity.
- **The Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD):** the Directive which is this cornerstone of EU cultural policy is currently under attack – from US political leaders, from global streamers at national level and at EU level. Independent producers express gratitude to the European Parliament for the draft resolution urging the Commission to defend the AVMS Directive and the cultural exception.

- **On Artificial Intelligence:** while AI offers great opportunities, we also need stronger safeguards to prevent massive copyright theft and to ensure fair and transparent remuneration for rightsholders.



Vice-President of the European Parliament Sabine Verheyen

Throughout the event, MEPs and producers alike emphasized that protecting independent production means protecting Europe's cultural sovereignty and creative freedom.

This event provided a valuable platform for open dialogue and exchange between policymakers and independent producers ahead of crucial negotiations and discussions on Europe's audiovisual sector. Both CEPI and EPC reaffirmed their commitment to working with EU institutions to ensure that independent production remains at the heart of Europe's cultural and economic agenda.



From left to right: Amanda Borghino (USPA- AnimFrance), Margaux Chielle (CEPI) and Emmanuelle Mauger (SPI), MEP Laurence Farreng, Vice-President Sabine Verheyen and MEP Emma Rafowicz, Kjersti Mo (EFAD Vice-President), Julie-Jeanne Régault and James Hickey (EPC) and finally Susan Newman (Director of Eurimages)