

The European Film Agency Directors

Common Declaration in support of Digital Cinema

October 2006

The European Film Agency Directors (EFADs) are committed to helping ensure European film fulfils its important cultural and economic role in Europe and internationally. The prerequisite for achieving this goal is the development and maintenance of vibrant film sectors, sustained by national and European policies that support the production, distribution and exhibition of films, promote the diversity of film in the respective countries while at the same time securing exchange and co-operation between EU-countries as well as between the EU and the world at large.

The directors of Europe's national film agencies (the EFADs) consider that digital cinema represents a major challenge for the whole of the European film industry, especially in relation to the development of online services (VOD) and the digitisation of theatrical distribution and exhibition.

While many technological and economic issues related to digital theatrical distribution and exhibition are still in discussion, to ensure that European film in all its diversity is made available to European audiences, it is vital that European cinema is fully prepared for the transition to digital.

The EFADs therefore believe that it is absolutely necessary that the largest possible catalogue of new and classic European films is available in the appropriate HD digital format for VOD, web and cable-based home video services, or in the DCI-compliant 2k to 4k digital format for theatrical screening. With the American majors moving quickly into the VOD and digital cinema market, with large and compelling libraries of American titles, there is a real risk that European films lose out and never reach a new and committed audience if European producers, distributors and exhibitors are unable to respond speedily to the digital challenge.

Effective support measures with a view to encouraging the digitisation and digital distribution of films are critical to the development of both digital cinema exhibition and of VOD platforms and are needed at both the national and the European level.

At a time when the guidelines for the MEDIA 2007 programme are in preparation, the EFADs are at the European Commission's disposal to discuss further possible new means of support to stimulate the uptake of digital cinema in Europe.

Signed, 23 October 2005, by:

Österreichisches Filminstitut (Austria)

Centre du Cinéma et de l'Audiovisuel de la Communauté française (Belgium)
Vlaams Audiovisueel Fonds (Belgium)
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 Cinema (Lithuania)
Film Fund Luxembourg (Luxembourg)
Malta Film Commission (Malta)
Nederlands Fonds v.d. Film (Netherlands)
Ministry of Culture - Department for Cinema (Poland)
Instituto do Cinema Audiovisual e Multimedia (Portugal)
Instituto de la Cinematografía y de las Artes Audiovisuales (Spain)
Ministry of Culture - Department for Cinema (Slovakia)
Slovenian Film Fund (Slovenia)
Swedish Film Institut (Sweden)
UK Film Council (United Kingdom)