

*Press release*

Brussels 03/03/2022 - CEPI, the European Audiovisual Production Association, stands in solidarity with the Ukrainians and the Ukrainian audiovisual community, and strongly condemns the actions taken by the Russian government against Ukraine.

It is essential that our sector, along with the society as a whole, continue to encourage the adoption of strong sanctions against the Russian regime and to support sanctions adopted by national and European governments and institutions.

*“There is no time for hesitation. Ukraine is Europe and a strong member of our European audiovisual producer community. We must go beyond the shock and the horror of this situation and do everything we can to support our colleagues. Audiovisual producers are essential to any society’s rich culture, with its diverse voices, the Ukrainian one must be preserved.” – Susana Gato, President of CEPI*

Faced with this extraordinary and horrifying situation, CEPI currently sees no other option but to strongly advise the immediate interruption of new engagement in audiovisual projects and programmes (co-)sponsored by the Russian Federation, as long as the invasion and occupation of Ukraine lasts. This is especially important for projects benefiting from public funding. Although co-production and partnership between producers across borders are essential for cultural exchange and diversity, we see the need for an emergency derogation and urge the Council of Europe to immediately suspend the participation of Russian state-owned or supported production, content and broadcasting - both in the Eurimages co-production programme and within the framework of the European Convention on Transfrontier Television.

We are also concerned for the Russian audiovisual community which for years has been persecuted by its government for bringing to the public different opinions and points of view on the realities of the Russian regime. We hope it can continue its essential work towards a democratic society and will not suffer the consequences of the Russian government actions.

Our efforts must go in providing humanitarian support to producers and film workers on the ground, as well as those fleeing the military aggression. CEPI wants to make clear through our actions, the actions of our members and our network, that we stand in solidarity with our friends and colleagues affected by the situation. We want them to know that we support them and stand by their side.

*(CEPI)The European Audiovisual Production was founded in 1989, to organise and represent the interests of independent cinema and television producers in Europe.*