

# Mungiu: European filmmakers able to take risks thanks to MEDIA

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European filmmakers have been able to take risks thanks to the European Union's [MEDIA Programme](#), director Cristian Mungiu declared in a keynote speech during the public hearing on MEDIA and MEDIA Mundus in Brussels today.

He explained that [MEDIA](#) support was crucial for the risky stages of project development and theatrical release. "If we want to encourage creativity, we need to take risks," he said, recalling how he had organized a "cinema caravan" around Romania to show his Cannes winner *4 Months, 3 Weeks, 2 Days* after its festival triumph. "It is a very romantic thing one can do once, but it doesn't work on a regular basis."

Mungiu noted that despite his film winning the Palme d'Or, it would not have been screened in most European Union countries were it not for MEDIA support.

Referring to the filmmakers' Thursday meeting with EC President Barroso and Culture Commissioner Vassiliou, Mungiu said that the roundtable had revolved around such issues as education and media literacy and stressed that the audiovisual professionals are the best people to provide feedback on how the MEDIA Programme can be improved.

While the ARP delegation had indicated to Barroso and Vassiliou that they were wanting assurance of financial independence for a future MEDIA Programme, the Commission is preferring to speak of autonomy for a MEDIA which would be part of the proposed new Creative Europe programme.

Meanwhile, another session saw MEDIA unit chief Aviva Silver unveiling the first results of last autumn's online survey staged as the first part of the consultation on the next MEDIA Programme after 2013.

She pointed out that the 2,586 respondents to this survey represented 10 times the number of people who had participated in the previous online consultation about the MEDIA Programme.

Some of the comments focused on the need for less bureaucracy and simpler procedures. "We are working on this and plan to reduce the time of when people apply and when they learn the result in the next MEDIA Programme," Silver explained.

Respondents to the survey were highly supportive of continuous training and also of initial training for students. As the German consultancy Wik Consult who was commissioned with coordinating the online consultation noted, "more than 90% felt that these training programmes contributed to the competitiveness of the European audiovisual sector. There was also strong support for initiatives to strengthen interaction between film schools and universities and the audiovisual sector."

Moreover, 88% of respondents agreed that support for cinemas screening a substantial proportion of non-national European works would have a positive impact on the European audiovisual sector, while 92% saw promotion of cinema, international television and specialized markets with a predominantly European focus could have a similar effect. The

MEDIA Programme's measures to assist independent production companies in accessing private funding and providing loan guarantees to independent producers was also very popular.

And there was similarly strong support - from 82% of the respondents - for supporting cinema digitization, one of the most recent initiatives of the MEDIA 2007 programme.

Wik Consult says that those participating in the online survey were asked to provide a relative ranking of seven of MEDIA 2007's action lines "in terms of their contribution to cultural diversity of the European audiovisual sector."

Heading the field here was distribution and circulation followed by producer's support, training, access to finance, promotion, digitization, and media and film literacy.