

PRESS RELEASE

Following a successful General Assembly meeting in Ljubljana hosted by GIZ on 17 November, the European Coordination of Independent Producers (CEPI) announces the appointment of a new President, Vice-President and Treasurer to the Board. CEPI is also delighted to welcome Mediapro as a new member.

Taking over from Barbara Galavan of Screen Producers Ireland as CEPI President, Assistant Delegate General at the French Union for Audiovisual Production (USPA), Jérôme Dechesne stated: *“the status of independent producers and their invaluable contribution to the AV value chain is often not adequately recognised, particularly in several Eastern and Central European Countries. This key role of independent producers must be strengthened to ensure investment in high quality original content is preserved for the benefit of viewers.”*

Jérôme was previously with the French Authors Society (SACD) where he was in charge of Audiovisual until 2013. In 2014, he joined the Society of Graphic and Plastic Arts' Authors (ADAGP) as Secretary-General, before taking on his current role with USPA in August 2015.

He is joined on the Board by Max Rumney of PACT (The UK Producers Alliance for Cinema and Television). *“Independent Producers are at the heart of creating indigenous European content. They face a number of threats from the Digital Single Market to Public Service Broadcasters not honouring their regulatory commitments to content quotas. It is important that the voice of Indies is heard. Otherwise, distinctive and cultural content will be lost to consumers”* said Max. Max is a solicitor specialising in television and film law with vast experience as a senior business affairs executive in the UK and United States. He has served as Director of Legal, Business Affairs and Industrial Relations for PACT since June 2014, and was appointed deputy to the CEO of PACT in December 2015.

Former CEPI President, Dr. Werner Müller of Film and Music Austria (FAMA) becomes Treasurer of the association. A Doctor of Law, Müller has been active in the Chamber of Commerce Austria, representing FAMA since 1983.

Moreover, CEPI will be strengthened by Mediapro joining the association. Founded in 1994, Mediapro is a Spanish communications group based in Barcelona. The group, present in twenty-one countries on four continents, is heavily involved in the audio-visual sector, including film and TV production. Inés Gete, Mediapro representative for CEPI, wanted to *“thank Elena and Jérôme for welcoming us to CEPI in order to cooperate on the common European issues of the sector.”* She explained that *“Mediapro is ready to work side by side with the rest of Spanish and European production companies for the achievement of the industry goals”*. Inés is a lawyer and coordinates Mediapro's European affairs from Madrid.

“All three of these new appointments as well as Mediapro joining CEPI bring a wealth of expertise and energy to the association at a crucial time. We are delighted to have them by our side as we continue to strengthen the voice of independent producers” Elena Lai, CEPI Secretary-General.

The appointments come at a time when independent producers face significant challenges. While CEPI embraces the development of a stronger digital economy for television, we are very concerned with the potential impact that parts of the European Commission's proposed Copyright package could have on the sector as a whole and particularly on Small and Medium Enterprises.

The proposals, in particular the review of the Satellite and Cable Directive, undermine both the functioning of the market for production of film and TV content in the EU and harms consumers. TV producers have been crucial in addressing the interest of consumers by providing varied cultural and linguistic content. The Regulation risks reducing the production and access to European TV and film content and restricting cultural diversity, ultimately damaging consumer interest.

About us: CEPI supports the interests of independent film & TV producers in Europe. Over 8000 CEPI members supply more than 16,000 hours of new programming each year to broadcasters in Europe, ranging from single documentaries and special event programming to game shows, light entertainment, and high-cost drama series. For more info, please contact Elena Lai, CEPI Secretary-General at cepi@europe-analytica.com.