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Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen
on behalf of the European Commission
(12.3.2026)

The Commission monitors and reports on market trends affecting the competitiveness of the audiovisual sector. The latest findings were published in the European Media Industry Outlook 2025¹, including specifically on concentration. Under EU merger rules², the Commission takes into account market concentration when assessing specific mergers.

Pursuant to the Creative Europe regulation³, actions under the MEDIA strand aim to foster a level playing field among Member States. For example, a dedicated action⁴ for independent production companies in countries with a low audiovisual capacity contributes to fostering their competitiveness and cultural relevance.

The Commission recently reported to the European Parliament⁵ on the evaluation of Creative Europe, which shows significant progress in improving the level playing field (collaborations between low and high-capacity countries increased to around 30% under the current programme, from less than 5% under the previous one). At the same time, it points to the need to further broaden the participation in MEDIA. Horizon Europe also funds projects addressing the competitiveness of the film industry in smaller EU markets⁶.

Looking ahead, the Commission's proposal for AgoraEU aims to strengthen collaborations among entities from Member States with different audiovisual capacities⁷. It should however be noted that MEDIA funding accounts for less than 1% of total national funding to the audiovisual sector in the EU. EU State aid rules⁸ make national funding to the audiovisual sector possible while preventing undue distortion to competition, thus helping to ensure competitiveness and balanced development across Member States, in line with both cultural policy and internal market rules.

¹ European Media Industry Outlook, SWD(2025)261, 5.9.2025.

² Council Regulation (EC) No 139/2004 of 20 January 2004 on the control of concentrations between undertakings (the 'Merger Regulation') (OJ L 24, 29.1.2004, p. 1).

³ See Article 3 of Regulation (EU) 2021/818 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing the Creative Europe Programme (2021 to 2027).

⁴ This is an annual call entitled 'European Mini Slate Development'.

⁵ Report from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions a Decade of Creative Europe, COM/2025/768, 17.12.2025.

⁶ See the 'CresCine' project in particular and also the 'REBOOT' project - Eastern European partners are an integral part of both projects' consortia.

⁷ Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the 'AgoraEU' programme for the period 2028-2034, COM(2025) 550, 16.7.2025.

⁸ See in particular the Communication from the Commission on State aid for films and other audiovisual works (2013/C 332/01; 15.11.2013) and the relevant provisions of the General Block Exemption Regulation.