SAA Press Release
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European Screenwriters and Directors societies welcome audiovisual exclusion from TTIP

The Society of Audiovisual Authors on behalf of its members and the 120,000 screenwriters and directors whose rights they represent welcome the Council’s adoption of a negotiation mandate that excludes audiovisual services, including for online, and that any subsequent change to the mandate on this issue will require unanimity among the Council.

Following weeks of vocal support for the exclusion by the full spectrum of the European cinema and TV sector, SAA is delighted by this victory for Europe’s cultural and creative diversity. The exclusion was supported by the European Parliament, who overwhelmingly voted in favour in a resolution on 23rd May, as well as over 8,000 creators from across Europe who signed a petition on the issue.

Any future attempt to discuss the issue later in the negotiation process will require full approval from the Council. The SAA will remain vigilant to ensure that the European Commission respects this mandate and abstains from any discussion on the audiovisual sector with the US.

Quotes

Cécile Despringre, Executive Director SAA said: “We are delighted to see that the Council managed to find the compromise that enabled ambitious trade negotiations to start without sacrificing Europe’s ability to re-define its cultural policies in the digital age.”

Jaco van Dormael, Belgian Director and SAA patron added: “This is a clear victory for filmmakers across Europe but we will remain vigilant at every step of the negotiation process. The cultural exception has enabled Europe to support European audiovisual creation in a way that pure market forces wouldn’t allow. It enables the world to discover our diversity through our films and for Europeans to learn about and understand each other.”

Jochen Greve, German screenwriter and SAA patron said: “As connected TVs make their way into our homes and people discover more and more new ways of accessing our works online it is essential that Europe can continue to guarantee access to European works for its citizens. The arrival of giant online operators who respect their bottom line more than our diversity means that Europe needs to stay strong and promote its own interests.”

About SAA
The Society of Audiovisual Authors (SAA) is an association of European Collective Management Societies representing audiovisual authors. Through its members (25 societies in 18 countries) SAA represents over 120,000 film and television European screenwriters and directors. More information www.saa-authors.eu @saabrussels