



## EUROPEAN FILMMAKERS FOR DEMOCRACY AND HUMAN DIGNITY

### A Europe-wide Framework for Film and Democracy

#### Mission Statement

Democracy thrives on the pillars of artistic freedom, cultural expression, and open discourse. Europe's dedication to cultural diversity is vividly reflected in its films, which foster empathy, inspire audiences, and present a vision of a better, more inclusive future. This responsibility is increasingly critical as Europe confronts a surge in right-wing extremism and divisive ideologies.

The rapid digital transformation of society has created a global crisis of trust. This unprecedented shift has left many unsettled, seeking simplistic solutions to complex problems. Fear, often expressed through xenophobia, racism, and exclusion, undermines the foundations of our democracies. Political leadership has often failed to offer adequate guidance or reassurance, leaving a vacuum filled by destructive populist narratives.

Filmmakers, with their unique ability to shape perceptions, have a crucial role in countering these trends. By telling stories that promote understanding, trust, and inclusivity, we can reinforce democratic values. At a time when emerging technologies like AI threaten to distort truth and amplify misinformation, filmmakers must provide authentic, impactful narratives that encourage critical engagement and hope.

The film industry cannot remain abstract or detached. Beyond entertainment, it is a powerful cultural asset that combines education and pleasure. Protecting the freedom of this medium is essential, and with it comes the responsibility to use its potential wisely. Through our work, we aim to address societal divisions and counter the appeal of populist ideologies by presenting nuanced, inclusive, and hopeful perspectives.

Cinema's role is not only to warn of current threats but to address their roots. By inspiring younger generations and fostering active democratic engagement, we can demonstrate that democracy is not guaranteed—it must be actively nurtured and defended.

The impact of images and sounds as a unifying force for European cohesion—an indispensable international community of values, now more than ever!

#### Signatories:

Kurt Brazda  
Director  
AAC Honorary President  
Chair—IMAGO Working Conditions Committee

Dr. Cristina Busch  
Attorney specializing in intellectual property  
and working conditions in filmmaking

Birgit Gudjonsdottir  
Cinematographer  
CINEMATOGRAPHIINNEN  
WOMAN\* Cinematographers Network

Maximilian Lange  
Production Designer  
President ARTSCENICO