



Austria: Drehbuchverband Österreich **Belgium:** Association des Scénaristes de l'Audiovisuel and Scenaristengilde vzw **Bulgaria:** Bulgarian Association of Film, TV and Radio Scriptwriters BAFTRS **Denmark:** Danske Dramatikeres Forbund **España:** Federación de Asociaciones de Guionistas del Audio-visual FAGA, includes: Asociación Galega de Guionistas; Autores Literarios de Medios Audiovisuales; Escritors Valencians de l'Audiovisual; Euskal Herriko Gidoigile Profesionalen Elkartea; Guionistes Associats de Catalunya **Finland:** Suomen Näytelmäkirjailijaliitto - Finlands Dramatikerförbund ry **France:** Union-Guilde des Scénaristes **Germany:** Verband Deutscher Drehbuchautoren e.V. **Greece:** Ένωση Σεναριογράφων Ελλάδος **Hungary:** Hungarian Association of Screenwriters **Iceland:** Félag leikskálda og handritshöfundu **Ireland:** Irish Playwrights and Screenwriters Guild **Italy:** Scrittori Associati di Cinema e Televisione **Netherlands:** Netwerk Scenarioschrijvers **Norwegia:** Norske Dramatikeres Forbund **Portugal:** Associação Portuguesa de Argumentistas e Dramaturgos **Sweden:** Sveriges Dramatikerförbund **Serbia:** Nezavisnost **Suisse:** Scénario **Turkey:** SEN-DER The Scriptwriters Association of Turkey **United Kingdom:** Writers' Guild of Great Britain

Mme Christine Albanel
Madame la ministre de la culture et de la communication
Ministère de la culture et de la communication
3 rue de Valois
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Madame,

The Federation of Screenwriters in Europe expresses its keenest concern at the threat to the well-being and independence of French screenwriters arising from the proposed reform to the structures and funding of the French state broadcaster, France Télévisions.

While the FSE welcomes in principle the decision to remove advertising from the public service channels, it considers that to do so without setting in place a guaranteed source of public funding is an irresponsible act that undermines the very concept of public service broadcasting.

Experience throughout Europe demonstrates conclusively that the licence fee is by far the most efficient means of providing stable and adequate funding for public broadcasters while ensuring a high degree of independence from state or commercial pressures. The French licence fee is currently among the lowest in Europe, having been allowed to stagnate for several years. Making the funding of France Télévisions dependent on the vagaries of the market as the French government is now proposing, via taxes

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Christina Kallas (President), Sveinbjörn Baldvinsson (Vice President), Bernard Besserglik (Treasurer), David Kavanagh, Stanislav Semerdjiev

on advertising and telecoms, is to destabilise the public broadcaster and sap its confidence in the future.

The FSE, representing Europe's 9 000 screenwriters, cannot be indifferent to policies which are certain to reduce the volume of programme-making and further depress the general level of payments made to writers.

The piecemeal system of replacement funding that the French authorities propose to set in place can only lead to a general decline in the quality of programmes across the board, affecting commercial as well as public service channels.

The FSE also regards the decision to allow the president of the republic to name the head of the public broadcasting system as a regressive measure, harking back to the days when the state effectively controlled the broadcast media. The move represents a threat, implicit but real, to freedom of expression and is to be deplored.

We urge French deputies to reconsider the current plans regarding the funding of public service broadcasting and to reject the proposal to allow executive oversight of public broadcasting.

Yours sincerely

Christina Kallas
FSE President