

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AUDIOVISUAL INDUSTRY IN GREECE:

Investing in infrastructure, film and tv production
and international outreach

September 12, 2022

'Nikolaos Germanos' Congress Centre
Thessaloniki



EKOME
National Centre
of Audiovisual Media
and Communication



ENTERPRISE GREECE
INVEST & TRADE



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European Regional Development Fund - Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance



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AGENDA

11:30 Arrivals - registration

12:00 Opening remarks :

- **Costas Fragkogiannis**, Deputy Minister for Economic Diplomacy and Openness, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- **Stavros Kalafatis**, Deputy Minister of Interior, responsible for Macedonia and Thrace
- **Alexandros Thanos**, Head of Tourism Sector, Region of Central Macedonia-Greece
- **Konstantinos Zervas**, Mayor of Thessaloniki
- **Marinos Giannopoulos**, CEO, Enterprise Greece SA

12:30 Discussion- Coordination :

- **Panos Kouanis**, President and CEO, EKOME

Speakers:

- **Betty Alexandropoulou**, Executive Director - Member of the Board, Enterprise Greece SA
- **John Kalafatis**, CEO, Nu Boyana Hellenic Studios - York Studios, York Films
- **Yiannis Karagiannis**, CEO, Kapa Studios - JK Productions
- **Stelios Kotionis**, Managing Director, FOSS Productions
- **Stratis Liarellis**, Executive Board Director, ANTENNA Group
- **Joseph Samaan**, President, Tanweer Group
- **Andreas Tsilifonis**, Executive Producer, CENTRAL ATHENS Productions



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PANELISTS BIO (in order of presentation)

Panos Kouanis

Panos Kouanis has worked in both the private and public sector, in Greece and abroad, and since 2017 he occupies the position of Chairman & Chief Executive Officer at the National Centre of Audiovisual Media & Communication. He has a Ph.D. and a B.S. in Economics from the School of Economics, University of Athens, and an M.Sc. in Broadcasting and Film from the College of Communication, Boston University. Panos Kouanis has extensive experience in all aspects of the Media industry including film and television production, marketing, distribution and sales, new media, and information communication technologies. Besides his considerable academic/teaching experience, he has published several research papers in national and international periodicals and participated in numerous conferences and international organisations all around the world.

Betty Alexandropoulou

Ms. Betty Alexandropoulou is the Executive Director of Enterprise Greece and Member of the Board, with comprehensive responsibility for foreign trade. Prior to her current role, she served as Special Advisor to the Greek Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and Enterprise Greece. Ms. Alexandropoulou comes with vast experience in senior leadership roles within government as well as private sector multinational organizations, and several years abroad in countries such as Switzerland, Argentina, and the United States. Formerly a Senior Commercial Advisor for the U.S. Department of Commerce at the U.S. Embassy in Greece, her portfolio included Healthcare and ICT sectors and the Select USA global program which facilitates U.S. foreign direct investment. Before that, she had accumulated over 18 years of experience in senior executive positions with bluechip companies like AT&T and Vodafone. A seasoned professional in managing global projects and teams, she specializes in international market expansion as related to trade promotion and investment attraction, as well as business transformation. Ms. Alexandropoulou holds a Master's in Business Administration and a Bachelor's in Economics & French Literature, with honors distinction, from universities in the United States, and a Professional Certified Coach Credential by ICF (International Coach Federation). She has served in business associations such as the Propeller Club and the American Chamber of Commerce and has participated in various conferences and industry forums as a keynote and panel speaker. Ms. Alexandropoulou is multicultural and communicates in several languages - native English and Greek, as well as fluent French and Spanish.

PANELISTS BIO (in order of presentation)

John Kalafatis

John Kalafatis is an entrepreneur and business executive with over three decades of experience in establishing, developing, and leading successful organizations in both the construction and the entertainment industries, creating thousands of jobs in New York and beyond. Since 1989 Mr. Kalafatis has founded many innovative and prestigious companies, starting with Skyline Restoration –the leading building enclosure restoration firm in New York, and a catalyst to the creation of the group of companies that followed–, SKYTrac Access Group, Spring Scaffolding, CGI Northeast, as well as the Andromeda Academy of Construction Trades, and Andromeda Advantage which serves as the back office for the group of companies. Mr. Kalafatis is also the founder of the non-profit organizations The Skyline Charitable Foundation and its Relief Access Program; and the Andromeda Community Initiative which provides free educational and workforce development programs. Since 2010 Mr. Kalafatis has been successfully involved in the film and television production industry, with York Studios and the creation of York Studios Michaelangelo Campus, one of New York's largest studios. He is also the co-founder and CEO of the production company York Films. Having lived in the US and Europe, John Kalafatis naturally brings his expertise to Greece. With partner Yariv Lerner, CEO, Nu Boyana Film Studios, Mr. Kalafatis is on a mission to make Nu Boyana Film Studios Hellenic –the new state-of-the-art film stages built in Northern Greece–, the number one choice for all film and TV productions in Europe and beyond.

Yiannis Karagiannis

Giannis Karagiannis is the owner and CEO of Kapa Studios – G. Karagiannis S.A and the production company J.K. Production S.A. He has a degree in Electrical Engineering from Aristotle University, an MBA in Economics as well as participation in seminars for professional producers through the MEDIA program. In addition, has served as the President of the Association of Greek Television and Video Film Producers and a Member of the Board of Directors. With over 26 years of experience in audio-visual productions, G. Karagiannis created content that was a milestone for Greek television, producing over 10,000 hours of content, which set a dynamic course for Kapa Studios. His highly successful television productions, “Wild Bees” and “Sasmos”, are now the two most popular television series in modern Greek television, whereas for the tv season 2022 - 2023 he is producing 8 television series a record number for Greek television. Understanding the need for even higher services in audiovisual production, he proceeded to build a new complex of television studios, Kapa 2 Studios in Markopoulo which was inaugurated in 2019. KAPA 2 is the largest and most modern film studios in Greece that meet all the international production standards. Kapa Studios' creative course does not include Greek collaborations only, but also international, since Kapa Studios serviced the productions of the films “Rise” for Disney +, “Crimes of the Future” by David Cronenberg, “My Big Greek Fat Wedding 3” by Nia Vardalos and “Handling the Undead” by Thea Hvistendahl. His future plans include the extroversion of Kapa Studios with the aim of providing services to even more international productions, co-productions with major foreign companies as well as the promotion of its own produced Greek content in foreign markets.



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Stelios Cotionis

Stelios Cotionis was born in Athens in 1983 and studied Mathematics at the University of Patras. He started his career in the fascinating industry of construction, but soon enough, during 2008, shifted into content production, initially as production assistant for advertising and then on film and TV production, successfully completing a number of feature and short films, episodic content, documentaries, commercials and live/taped events. Since 2018, he took over as Managing Director, alongside his role as the main producer of the production company Foss Productions. During his tenure on the Board of Directors he introduced 7 new departments within the growing ecosystem of Foss, the most recent of which are: Foss Studios (5 studios with a surface area of 3.000 sq.m. for production of live and taped shows), Foss Series (for the creation of episodic content such as the much awaited Maestro by Christopher Papakaliatis and Milky Way by Vasilis Kekatos, on broadcasters and platforms), Production Services (for attracting foreign productions to Greece), and finally the newly established VFX department. Within the framework of the newly established Film Department which was also created in 2016 under his supervision, with his personal involvement and guidance, Foss Productions managed to collaborate with top notch companies and creators, in order to deliver an eclectic filmography that contains multi-award winning films, documentaries and series, such as Echoes of The Past, Third Kind, Broken Sound, Suntan, Pity, All the Fires the Fire, Memoir of a Veering Storm, Maestro and many more. Foss's content has been multi-awarded in A-list international film festivals (Cannes: La Semaine De La Critique, Venice, Sundance, Locarno, Rotterdam, Telluride, Clermont-Ferrand) and sold globally through important international hubs, distributors (Strand Releasing, Visit Films, New Europe Film Sales, Salaud Morisset) and broadcasters (Arte, Canal+, Critirion Channel), worldwide. Among a plethora of awards that he has managed to deliver for Foss's palmarès during the years, one can spot some of the highest international awards in content, such as the Gold Glass in Cannes, in June 2022 for Branded Content.

Stratis Liarellis

Stratis Liarellis is Executive Board Director of ANTENNA Group, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Digea S.A. and General Secretary of the Hellenic Commercial TV Nationwide Broadcasting Union. He was born and raised in Mytilene. He worked as political editor and main editorial writer for the Sunday editions of "Eleftherotipia" and "Ethnos" newspapers, the daily editions of "Ta Nea", "To Vima" and of the magazines "Ena", "Anti", "Tachidromos", "Epsilon" and "TV3". Moreover, as political editor he worked at the Athens News Agency (ANA), hosted informative shows and interviewed numerous political party leaders for ANT1 TV, Mega Channel as well as ANT1 FM and TOP FM radio stations. He was Chief Political Editor of MEGA CHANNEL. In 1990 he joined ANTENNA, in 2010 he was promoted to Manager of News and Current Affairs, in 2012 he was appointed Managing Director of ANT1 TV and in 2014 he became Managing Director of Antenna Group Greece. From 2019 onwards he holds the position of Executive Board Director of ANTENNA Group.



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PANELISTS BIO (in order of presentation)

Joseph Samaan

Tanweer Group's President, Joseph Samaan, is at the forefront of the development of Greece's film and media industry, and one of the sector's most outspoken proponents. He has built excellent professional relationships with the leaders of the major Hollywood, Bollywood, and European media companies. Joseph Samaan founded Tanweer 35 years ago and has built a 360° media company known for its quality. Tanweer is an international media company with diverse activities in production, post-production, distribution, localization services, and exhibition. The Group operates in multiple territories including Greece, Cyprus, India, South East Asia, Turkey, the Middle East & North Africa. Over the decades, Tanweer has acquired a reputation of trustworthiness, professionalism and reliability. With over 30 years of experience, the company has developed unique expertise for the requirements of each region. Tanweer is determined to set new standards in the entertainment industry by building on its excellent reputation and partnerships.

Andreas Tsilifonis

Andreas Tsilifonis started his career as a film director but after 17 years and more than 1.000 of shooting days he summoned his creativity into producing and line-producing, starting with the Greek part of the film LIFE WITHOUT ZOE for TOUCHSTONE PICTURES, USA, directed by Francis Ford Coppola. During the last 20 years he is responsible for the production of more than 4,000 commercial cam-paigns for acclaimed international companies, feature films and tv shows. In his capacity as President of Media Producers Association of Greece he initiated major changes in the institutional side of the film industry, including the Hellenic Film Commission, the TV channels levy for the feature film production and the cash rebate incentives scheme which is considered the most prominent one in Europe, at the moment. (<http://www.centralathens.gr/incentives/>)



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