

EPRA 30 years – an anniversary greeting from your Chair

Dear EPRA colleague,

With this letter, I would like to wish you a very warm welcome to the 61st EPRA meeting here in Chişinău!

Every EPRA meeting is special, but this one is bound to be unique, as we are celebrating our 30th anniversary, together with our hosts from the Audiovisual Council of Moldova. This is a most appropriate and symbolic location for our celebrations, right at the heart of the challenges and hopes facing European democracy and free media.

As wedding anniversaries go, 30 years stand for the pearl. And I think we can be looking forward to many pearls these coming two days – discussing important topics, sharing experiences, and meeting with colleagues, experts and guests.

Celebrating 30 years is also an opportunity to pause and reflect on what EPRA means, and why EPRA is important to us as members. I think recalling and reaffirming our common values is a good place to start.

*First comes **Independence**:* in an increasingly polarized world, EPRA is strictly neutral, non-political and impartial in its approach and operations. This is more important than ever.

*Then comes **Informality**:* the informality in our deliberations and interactions encourages a safe, free-flowing discourse, and the exchange of a frank and diverse set of views. This contributes to a sense of community amongst our members, where we can both contribute and gain.

*Last, but certainly not least, comes **Collaboration**:* we build strong links. We value our connections to other networks, the media industry, governmental and non-governmental organisations, academia, and sectoral interest groups. But above all, we cherish and nurture our internal links. As media regulators, we may all be very different from each other, in terms of size, mission, resources, and national context. Yet, we have quite a lot in common. Being open-minded, willing to share our experiences, discussing common challenges and learning from one another, are in my opinion the most important values for us as members.

On a personal note, this will be my last meeting as Chairperson of EPRA, as my mandate comes to an end after six years in the Executive Board. Looking back, it has been an eventful mandate, with two long years of virtual meetings owing to Covid, developing a new Strategy, coming up with new formats and modes of interaction, and last, but not least: a new visual identity, which we will reveal at this meeting in Chişinău. Just like our media landscapes, we as regulators, and EPRA as a network, need to ensure that we continuously develop and adapt to changes. I have done my very best to contribute to that during my years on the Board. I have been lucky enough to work with very professional Board colleagues and an experienced and hard-working Secretariat, and last, but not least, I have had the opportunity to get to know you all better. It has all been a privilege!

As you know, we will elect a new Board here in Chişinău. I am pleased to see that despite the busy agenda of media regulators, there has been a high level of interest in joining the EPRA Board. I am confident that the new Board will continue to steer our network in safe waters, in the best EPRA tradition.

Together with our hosts, the Executive Board and the Secretariat have prepared a special anniversary programme for this meeting. I hope that you will enjoy it, and I wish you all a memorable stay!

Best regards,



Mari Velsand
EPRA Chair