

## **The REBOOT Podcast: Research Insights on European Film in a Changing Global Landscape**

By Yves Saint Clair Zogo

*At a moment of high-pace transformation for the European Film Industry, the REBOOT Podcast emerged as a research-driven platform that brought together empirical research and expert perspectives to examine the structural, economic, cultural and technological forces already shaping European cinema. By placing academic analysis in direct dialogue with industry practice and policy debate the podcast documented how competitiveness, visibility and cultural diversity are being negotiated in a rapidly evolving audiovisual landscape.*

Across its episodes, the podcast examined how European cinema is being reshaped by digitalisation, global competition as well as shifting audience behaviours. Central themes comprised the impact of video-on-demand platforms on national film industries, the dominance of US-based streaming services and the persistent fragmentation of the European audiovisual market. Drawing on REBOOT research and expert commentaries, discussions highlighted how distribution models, visibility mechanisms and recommender systems increasingly influence what audiences see, raising questions about cultural diversity, competition and regulatory intervention amongst others in the algorithmic age.

A strong policy dimension ran throughout the series with episodes exploring the role of EU film policy instruments such as quotas, visibility obligations, and regulatory frameworks in adapting to automated recommendation systems and platform governance. Legal and policy experts highlighted the challenges of transparency, the “black box” problem of algorithms, and the limits of traditional cultural policy tools in a streaming-dominated environment, illustrating how policy choices directly affect the circulation and competitiveness of European films. The podcast also addressed structural issues within the European film ecosystem ranging from funding models through production structures to the growing influence of digital platforms on creative and economic decision-making. Through exchanges with key stakeholders in the likes of film institute directors, cultural managers, researchers and industry representatives, the series documented ongoing debates around sustainability, creative freedom and the balance between market competitiveness and cultural responsibility.

Importantly, the REBOOT Podcast extended its analysis beyond Europe’s internal dynamics to global circulation and audience transformation. A central focus, based on research with more than 4,500 young people across Europe, episodes examined the preferences of digitally fluent, socially inclusive younger audiences, who are drawn to narratives of “otherness” and cooperation rather than traditional hierarchies. Simultaneously, the podcast highlighted the limited market share of European films in parts of Latin America - often between 1% and 3% despite the presence of streaming platforms, pointing to structural barriers such as limited marketing, niche positioning and low visibility. Case studies from Latin America and Europe illustrated emerging strategies, from gender-balanced production models to innovative digital distribution experiments, that seek to address these gaps.

Beyond serving as a dissemination tool, the REBOOT Podcast offered a dialogue platform, translating research outputs into accessible conversations while connecting policymakers, researchers, filmmakers and industry stakeholders. By documenting concrete research insights and real-world practices, the series contributed to a profound understanding of how European cinema currently operates within a globalised, platform-driven audiovisual landscape - and where tensions, inequalities as well as opportunities are already evident.

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