



Integrated policy recommendations & EU Film 2030 Agenda

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	the project's online repository, Zenodo. Furthermore, it provides a set of policy recommendations addressed to the European Union and national policymakers to contribute to the Union's endeavours for a future-proof plan to enhance the competitiveness of the European Film Industry within and across the borders of the Union.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AI	Artificial Intelligence
AI Act	Artificial Intelligence Act (Regulation (EU) 2024/1689)
AV Market	Audiovisual Market
AV Sector	Audiovisual Sector
AVMSD	Audiovisual Media Services Directive (Directive 2010/13/EU)
CCIs	Cultural and Creative Industries
CFREU	Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union
CoE	Council of Europe
DSA	Digital Services Act (Regulation (EU) 2022/2065)
E&L(s)	Exception(s) and Limitation(s) (to Copyright and Related Rights)
EEAS	European External Action Service
EFI	European Film Industry
EFP	European Film Promotion
ELIAMEP	Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy
EU	European Union
EUFF	European Union Film Festival
EUR	European University of Rotterdam
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation (Regulation (EU) 2016/679)
InfoSoc Directive	Information Society Directive (Directive 2001/29/EC)
IPRED	Intellectual Property Rights Enforcement Directive (Directive 2004/48/EC)
JYU	University of Jyväskylä
KHAS	Kadir Has University



MEPs	Members of the Parliament
OWD	Orphan Works Directive (Directive 2012/28/EU)
RLD	Rental and Lending Directive (Directive 2006/115/EC)
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SSSA	Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna (Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies)
TVWFD	Television Without Frontiers Directive (Council Directive 89/552/EEC)
UC3M	Universidad Carlos III de Madrid
ULIEGE	University of Liege
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIVIE	University of Vienna
USA	United States of America
VoD (Platform)	Video-on-Demand (Platform)
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization
WP(s)	Work Package(s)
WTO	World Trade Organization
YAA	Young Audience Award



1. THE SUMMARY OF THE REBOOT PROJECT

This project aims to connect the existing strengths, identify and overcome weaknesses and plan for future competitiveness in the fields of policy, practice and experience. More concretely, the Project's objectives are, on the one hand, to explore the long-standing strengths and pervasive gaps in European competitiveness and policies for competitiveness. This includes ways of 'measuring', 'analysing' and 'evaluating' the impact of policies and strategic pathways. On the other hand, the project aspires to place attention on the active preparation for the future in the area of audiences by exploring audience preferences and their generation, as well as modes of film content production. The latter are elements which today's youth will carry and engage with in the coming decades as makers and consumers, as well as industry and policy leaders. Therefore, the consortium interrogates not only the 'what is' but also the 'what has been' and 'what will be' with fresh lenses.

REBOOT's ambition is to provide a full set of knowledge of the European film industry (EFI), which maximises its existing strengths, combined with strategic and tactical dimensions of action for the optimisation of the potential held in European youth public, understood both as emerging audiences and as citizens. Specifically, the ambition of the project combines several dimensions, which reinforce each other but are listed separately for analytical purposes (and in no particular order): **(a)** increasing support for young people's engagement with European film; **(b)** strengthening the place of the European Union (EU) in the global audiovisual economy, particularly in light of the rise of video-on-demand (VoD); **(c)** supporting cultural diversity in the EU film industry; **(d)** addressing the need for a different understanding of competitiveness and relevant indicators in this context; and **(e)** recognising and supporting the importance for the EU of film and, more broadly, of the cultural and creative sector as a geopolitical asset.



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2. INTRODUCTION

REBOOT: Reviving, Boosting, Optimising and Transforming European Film Competitiveness ('the REBOOT project' or 'the Project') is a multidisciplinary research project that brings together a consortium of twelve universities and research institutions across Europe to critically evaluate the current state and competitive power of the EFI within the EU and global audiovisual market (hereinafter 'AV market'), in order to develop novel strategies to enhance the EFI's share in the global AV market. Approaching the topic from different disciplinary perspectives, the REBOOT project aims to identify and map the indicators characterising the EFI's strengths, while addressing the various factors that hinder the EFI from thriving.

In this context, the REBOOT project is committed to understanding the building blocks of 'competitiveness', particularly that of the EFI, through a retrospective analysis of the social, policy and legal background against which it is constructed. Building on and updating the defining elements of 'competitiveness' within such a multi-layered framework, the REBOOT project aims to envision the future trajectories of the EFI and strategise its competitive strength in the European and global AV market. Therefore, the Project not only examines and maps current indicators of internal and international competitiveness but also seeks to identify new measures to evaluate this phenomenon in relation to technological progress, prevailing trends in the preferences and behaviours of key market actors, legislative reforms, and shifts in consumer habits. In doing so, the Project pays special attention to promoting European norms and values that comprise the cornerstones of the EU's agenda regarding the European audiovisual sector (European AV sector), such as safeguarding media pluralism, protecting cultural and linguistic diversity, and the protection of minors, while reinforcing European culture (COM(1999) 657 final, COM(2001) 0534 final).

Aligned with its goals, the REBOOT project recognises the unique perspectives of various market actors and stakeholders, including cinema professionals involved in different stages of the filmmaking process, consumers of cinematographic content—particularly young audiences—and the EU and national policymakers shaping the policies and legislative framework that inform and regulate the operation of the EFI. With this spirit, the project develops a set of policy tools to enhance the competitive power of the EFI, such as:

- **Policy briefings** to draw the attention of the general public to the EU strategies on the EFI,
- **Policy recommendations** addressed to the EU and national policy-makers to trigger policy and legislative reforms,



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- **Code of best practices**, co-developed with cinema professionals, to provide experience-based information and guidance to the members of the EFI at large, and,
- **Public engagement and dissemination activities** to share the findings and the abovementioned policy tools of the REBOOT project with greater international and national audiences and stakeholders.

In this framework, this project deliverable, namely D6.3 - Integrated policy recommendations and EU Film 2030 Agenda, is dedicated to the presentation of the key research findings and the policy recommendations produced under works packages (WPs) 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the REBOOT project as a consolidated document. Envisioned as such, this project deliverable falls under the research endeavours organised under Work Package 6 (WP6) - Indicators and recommendations, led by Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna (SSSA), aimed at translating the scientific output of the REBOOT project into a user-friendly and easy-to-navigate format. Aligned with the overarching aim and objective of WP6, Task 6.3 (T6.3) and particularly Deliverable 6.3 (D6.3) provides an overview of the scientific outputs of the project deliverables produced by University of Vienna (UNIVIE), European University of Rotterdam (EUR), Hellenic Foundation for European Policy (ELIAMEP), University of Liège (ULIEGE), Kadir Has University (KHAS), Universidad Carlos III de Madrid (UC3M), Université Côte d'Azur (UCA), and University of Jyväskylä (JYU) with the goal of promoting European films internationally while ensuring that the EFI simultaneously achieves greater competitiveness, diversity, inclusiveness, and sustainability.

This deliverable consists of six sections.

Section 1 above provided a general overview of the REBOOT project.

Section 2 herein contextualises the deliverable at hand by offering insight into the policy and legislative impact that the REBOOT project aimed to achieve.

Section 3 builds on the research endeavours of SSSA under WP6. **Sub-section 3.1** illustrates the main gaps and key findings arising from Task T6.1. **Sub-section 3.2** provides policy recommendations based on policy-driven quantitative data from both economic and social standpoints. In addition, it discusses considerations related to data gaps and offers recommendations for future interventions.

Section 4 brings together the key findings of the research outputs of Tasks 3.2, 3.4, 3.5, 4.1, 4.3, 5.1, 5.2, 5.5, 5.6, and 5.7 produced by ELIAMEP, JYU, UNIVIE, KHAS, UC3M, ULIEGE, and EUR on topics ranging from the young audiences, hence future film professionals of European



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audiovisual media, to the perspectives of the European and non-European film professionals with regard to the competitiveness of the EFI within the international audiovisual market. Considering the variety of topics encompassed under this section, the Section is divided into five sub-sections. **Sub-section 4.1.** elaborates on the child's rights in the digital audiovisual industry. Subsequently, **Subsection 4.2** delves into the European film awards and festivals, also by paying attention to the interaction of young audiences with EFI using findings from T5.1 and T5.2, while **Sub-section 4.3** further reflects on the building blocks of a child-friendly EFI. Last but not least, **Sub-section 4.4** puts forward suggestions for the development of an EU policy framework aimed at enhancing the internationalization of European works, based on findings from Tasks 3.4 and 3.5, highlighting key results from Deliverable 3.5. This sub-section is complemented by **Sub-section 4.5**, which focuses on the perspectives of non-European film professionals and their approach towards the internationalisation of the EFI. While **Subsection 4.6**, examines the understanding of non-European film professionals towards the international market, based on findings from Task 4.3 and Deliverable 4.4.

Section 5 is dedicated to an overview of Task 3.1, which was conducted by SSSA, UNIVIE, and ELIAMEP, to map the policy and legislative context that informs and governs the operation of the EFI within the borders of the EU and across the borders of the EU Member States. In this regard, the section offers a brief summary of the key findings of Deliverable 3.3, which was designed as a deliverable for national and EU policymakers and legislators, providing policy recommendations to guide future policy and legislative interventions at the national and EU levels. Task 3.1. And Deliverable 3.3, therefore, Section 5, covers the interface between cultural diversity and the EU's cultural policies, the legal fragmentation across Europe due to the national implementation strategies of the EU copyright and media norms by the EU Member States, and the EU policies and norms for the protection of minors.

Finally, **Section 6** concludes the project deliverable.

3. SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDICATORS AND MEASUREMENT TOOLS FOR POLICYMAKING

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3.1. Key Findings

Evidence-informed policymaking is essential to ensure that public interventions effectively support EFI competitiveness, cultural diversity, and sustainability. Reliable and policy-relevant indicators enable policymakers to monitor structural changes, assess the impact of regulatory and funding measures, and respond to emerging challenges. This section highlights the work carried out by SSSA within WP6 about data gaps, new indicators, and data visualisation to provide the foundation for understanding current gaps, forecasting potential impacts, and informing the final policy recommendations.

Concerning the development of new indicators, the ambition of the REBOOT project is to move beyond the mere economic impact of EFI and to develop a methodology to further assess its social impact. Official statistics as retrieved from EUROSTAT only provide a partial picture of the EFI impact, mostly focusing on its direct economic effects looking at sectoral performance, measured as wages, employment, number of business units, and gross value added. Already within the “strict” economic domain REBOOT acknowledges that the EFI economic effect might span to other industries. Therefore, the empirical results of this WP can be organised into three main strands of evidence, based on the gaps identified from both academic and institutional perspectives.

First, from an economic perspective, we highlight a gap concerning the role of the indirect effects of EFI on the local economy. To address this, we build on existing definitions and approaches to economic embeddedness developed in other scientific fields (and implemented in the empirical analysis of D6.2 – Report on Indicators) in order to provide a more sophisticated and ad hoc measure of EFI embeddedness. To this end, we employed data from Eurostat sources (e.g., EUREGIO, FIGARO). The dataset elaborated included information for 16 EU countries and about 270 regional levels for the period 2016–2019 (NUTS 1 and NUTS 2, where available). The embeddedness of the EFI is closely correlated with the broader economic context, reflecting patterns of economic development and providing valuable insights for policy-driven interventions. This relationship is particularly evident at the national level, and to a lesser extent at the regional level, highlighting development pathways linked to economic complexity. In particular, EFI embeddedness is strongest in more developed economies, where the audiovisual sector benefits from economies of scale and proximity to major economic and administrative capitals. Furthermore, within the wealthiest regions, higher levels of EFI embeddedness are associated with the development of Cultural and Creative industries (CCIs), likely fostering more specialised and higher value-added activities.



Second, from a social standpoint, we identify limited empirical evidence on the linkages between film content and social values. To overcome this limitation, we propose a novel approach that allows film content to be mapped and classified according to the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), using text analysis based on embedding methods on films synopses and plots. To implement this analysis, we retrieved data from publicly available sources, namely IMDb and Wikipedia. The dataset includes approximately 1,480 titles from European productions and co-productions spanning the period 2012–2022. The content analysis offers a detailed mapping of film narratives in relation to the SDGs. One of the most salient findings concerns production modes, particularly collaborative arrangements. European co-productions are more frequently associated with films that engage with socially relevant themes and topics within their narratives, demonstrating a heightened sensitivity to sustainability-related issues. These results underscore the important role of cinema as a cultural medium, as well as its capacity to influence public discourse, shape societal values, and contribute meaningfully to the broader sustainability agenda.

Third, another identified gap concerns the limited availability of data and visualisation tools that would enable the production of policy-driven evidence for the assessment and monitoring of the audiovisual sector (and CCIs more broadly), particularly with respect to cross-country and cross-regional comparisons. This issue is well known among academics and experts and will require particular attention going forward. Concerning the visualisation, we have developed the REBOOT Competitiveness dashboard, that facilitates the access to findings and policy-driven data produced under the REBOOT project (<https://thereboot-project.eu/dashboard>).

3.2. Policy Recommendations

The findings from WP6 provide robust evidence on productivity, employment, value added, and the degree of embeddedness of the EFI across European regions. The results indicate that the audiovisual sector is most strongly established in highly developed areas with well-developed cultural and creative infrastructures, thereby reinforcing broader regional competitiveness. By identifying both strengths and structural imbalances, the analysis offers quantitative hints for targeted investment strategies, regional development policies, and recommendations for future monitoring and assessments of the phenomena. In addition, the content analysis of the social value of audiovisual products provides qualitative insights and trend-based evidence that are useful for considering films not only as cultural products associated with leisure, but also as soft-power tools for spreading social values and shaping identities and ideas.



However, the analysis also highlights significant gaps in quantitative data required for the monitoring and assessment of the audiovisual sector. These gaps affect both the economic dimension (to a lesser extent) and, more critically, the social dimension. Overall, this evidence supports the development of a policy recommendations framework and proposals related to the official collection and further development of new indicators to monitor the audiovisual sector from a multidisciplinary perspective. Where relevant, policy recommendations are articulated across short-, medium-, and long-term time horizons.

- **Recommendation 1: Enhancing economic resilience and labour conditions in the European audiovisual sector**

Economic background and place-specific local endowments do not allow for one-size-fits-all solutions. There is significant heterogeneity across countries, related to market size and composition, incentive schemes, and legislative frameworks, as well as within countries, due to the presence of subnational administrative bodies and agglomeration economies. At the same time, industrial actors in the sector often face economic challenges, such as liquidity constraints and a high risk of bankruptcy, particularly when they operate as relatively small firms in terms of employment, value added, and market share. Moreover, from the job market standpoint, it appears that the EFI has a structurally fragile pattern with specific reference to the remuneration of the work (wages), across and within countries. Given the limited information due to a missing cross-country (and cross-regional) database that tracks the different remuneration, also due to the significant presence of freelancers and short-term contracts, the recommendation is to conduct monitoring on the general work conditions of the sectors, and evaluate the possibility of promoting more sustainable contracts and providing a more immediate form of compensation in case of incapacity and insolvency of employers.

Short-term actions:

- Foster existing incentives, and/or establish emergency support mechanisms for audiovisual actors who are at risk of bankruptcy and liquidity.
- Establish temporary compensation funds for vulnerable workers in cases of employer insolvency or work incapacity during production, including monetary and/or administrative penalties in cases of fraudulent insolvency.

Medium-term actions:



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- Promote anti-crowding-out programmes by monitoring the business demography of economic actors within the EFI, in order to identify and assess their capabilities and needs through a place-based approach.
- Promote and incentivise economic actors within the EFI to adopt more sustainable contractual arrangements for workers, taking into account local market conditions, remuneration levels in the audiovisual sectors, and the rest of CCIIs.

Long-term actions:

- Harmonise and integrate best practices among economic actors across EU Member State markets through ad hoc legislative acts and agreements that, facilitate co-production and ensure the long-term viability of EFI actors with sustainable business models.
 - Labour mobility can help mitigate the effects of EFI economic downturns in more fragile European economies. Targeted interventions within the Single European Market could therefore strengthen cross-border mobility, expand work opportunities, and enhance integration across European Film Industry hubs.
- **Recommendation 2: Foster the socio-economic integration (embeddedness) of the audiovisual sector within the local milieu**

In addition, the role of the EFI is crucial within the CCIIs and, more broadly, through its spillover effects on other sectors of the economy, such as manufacturing. More specifically, the degree of integration into the local economic system, namely, economic embeddedness, can significantly influence the success of the EFI, beyond the performance of the sector alone.

Short-term actions:

- Mapping of the local supply chains and network, including a pilot edition of guidelines of local cooperatives, as well as a pilot support to local suppliers to promote the first forms of inter-sectoral integrations.

Medium-term actions:

- Promote forms of programs that incentivise the cooperatives with local economic actors and suppliers. For example, hybrid industrial incubators and business accelerators (hubs).



- Promote embeddedness not only at the sectoral level but also through stronger linkages with local institutions, reinforcing institutional ties with local authorities and organisations (e.g. Italian Film Commissions).

Long-term actions:

- Harmonise incentives and legislative support at the European level to facilitate and strengthen co-production across EU partners, without losing the specificity and socio-economic place-based specific features.
- **Recommendation 3: Enhance and promote the co-production that promote social and EU cultural values**

While films are widely recognised as key cultural drivers for disseminating European and social values, greater support for intra-European co-productions is needed to enhance their international reach and cultural impact beyond the EU's borders.

Medium-term actions:

- Maintain and reinforce a strategic approach to promoting and incentivising film productions that engage with socially relevant themes (e.g., environmental sustainability, gender equality, psychological well-being, and inclusiveness) within their narratives.
- Incentivise co-productions and promote more inclusive forms of pan-European agreements that move beyond bilateral frameworks, fostering European productions with a culturally integrated vision.

Long-term actions:

- Institutionally recognise the audiovisual industry as a strategic cultural soft-power asset for promoting European values internationally.
- **Recommendation 4: Address data gaps and strengthen multi-level monitoring of the audiovisual sector and creative and cultural industries**

The analysis conducted in WP6 focused primarily on the macro level, using publicly available data, and on the firm level, drawing on licensed datasets. While these sources enable broad monitoring of economic dimensions within the audiovisual sectors, they remain largely limited to aggregate and sectoral or firm-level information. To support the long-term sustainability of the audiovisual sectors, and, more broadly, the CCIs, there is a clear need to develop more consistent and integrated databases that incorporate multilevel and multidimensional information currently unavailable.



In particular, the lack of harmonised individual-level data on labour market dynamics and working conditions significantly constrains the explanatory power of existing analyses, limiting comparative assessments across countries and within national contexts. Moreover, data capturing the social and cultural dimensions of the audiovisual sector are substantially less developed than economic data, hindering a comprehensive understanding of the roles of economic and institutional actors, as well as the contribution of audiovisual products as drivers of social value, cultural identity, and soft power.

Short-term actions:

- Conduct a comprehensive review and mapping of existing public and private (licensed) databases capable of delivering granular data at country, regional, firm and individual levels.

Medium/Long-term actions:

- Promote the creation and harmonisation of databases at the European level through common standards to ensure comparability of socio-economic dimensions, support evidence-based policymaking, and enable long-term monitoring of the audiovisual sectors and the wider CCIs.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS ON ADDRESSING GAPS AND LEVERAGING ENABLERS IN POLICY ACTIONS

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4.1. Children's Rights in the Digital Film Industry

4.1.1. Key Findings

The research carried out within the REBOOT project highlights that the digital transformation of the film and audiovisual industry has profoundly reshaped the position of children within this ecosystem.



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Children are no longer merely passive recipients of audiovisual content, but increasingly active users of digital services and participants in data-driven cultural environments. This shift requires a re-conceptualisation of children not only as consumers, but as rights-holders whose fundamental interests must be safeguarded throughout the entire lifecycle of digital audiovisual products and services.

This section outlines the activities undertaken by SSSA within WP5 as part of the T5.7 related to children's rights in the digital film industry. A core finding of our research is that existing regulatory frameworks still struggle to fully operationalise the principle of the best interests of the child in the context of digitalised film services and products. While international and European instruments clearly recognise children as subjects of rights — notably under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights — the implementation of these principles in the audiovisual digital market remains fragmented and uneven.

First, the analysis shows that children engage with audiovisual products and services through personalised interfaces, algorithmic recommendation systems, interactive features and AI-driven marketing strategies. These practices generate extensive data flows, enabling profiling, behavioural tracking and predictive analytics that operate largely invisibly to users and their caregivers. As a result, children are routinely exposed to data processing practices that exceed their cognitive capacity to understand risks and long-term consequences, thereby undermining their autonomy, privacy and capacity for informed choice.

Second, despite the existence of an advanced EU regulatory framework – including Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (General Data Protection Regulation, GDPR), Regulation (EU) 2022/2065 (Digital Services Act, DSA), Regulation (EU) 2024/1689 (Artificial Intelligence Act; AI Act), and Directive 2010/13/EU (Audiovisual Media Services Directive, AVMSD) – the research highlights significant gaps in the effective protection of children within the digital audiovisual environment. While social platforms and online intermediaries are subject to enhanced due diligence obligations under the DSA – including specific protections for minors and a ban on targeted advertising based on profiling – VoD services and streaming platforms often fall outside the scope of these obligations when they do not host user-generated content or interactive features. This uneven protection creates gaps in the safeguarding of children's rights, particularly given that film content is increasingly accessed through hybrid environments combining streaming, recommendation algorithms, marketing tools, and cross-platform data sharing. The AVMSD has partially addressed these issues by promoting media literacy and protection of minors, but its current framework does not fully account for the data-driven and AI-enhanced nature of contemporary audiovisual services. Our findings suggest that



children's exposure to risks does not depend solely on the type of service, but on the underlying technological and economic infrastructures that govern content delivery and monetisation. This calls for a more function-oriented approach to regulation, capable of addressing risks across different service categories and business models.

Third, the findings underline that profiling and targeted recommendation practices remain pervasive in the film industry, even where regulatory safeguards formally exist. Algorithmic personalisation continues to shape children's exposure to content, commercial messages, and advertising, often prioritising engagement and monetisation over the best interests of the child. These dynamic risks reinforcing harmful patterns, such as exposure to age-inappropriate content, commercial manipulation, and the narrowing of cultural horizons through filter bubbles.

Another central finding concerns the widespread reliance on parental control tools as primary safeguards for children's access to digital film content. While parental controls represent an important first-line measure, their effectiveness is significantly constrained by both design choices and social factors.

From a technical perspective, parental control systems are often complex, opaque, or poorly integrated into platform architectures. They may default to permissive settings, rely on opt-out rather than opt-in models, or lack granular filtering options. From a social perspective, disparities in digital literacy and time availability limit parents' capacity to actively supervise and engage with their children's digital experiences.

Our research shows that parental controls cannot substitute structural protections embedded by design and by default. Without transparent interfaces, non-profiling modes of access, and age-appropriate information, parental responsibility risks becoming a symbolic safeguard rather than an effective one. This finding supports a shift from a consent-centric model towards preventive, child-centred design obligations for platform operators.

Importantly, the research does not frame the digital film industry solely as a source of risk. On the contrary, audiovisual content plays a crucial role in children's cultural participation, education, and socialisation. Film and audiovisual media can foster creativity, critical thinking, emotional intelligence, and awareness of social values, including those aligned with the SDGs.

Our findings emphasise the need to balance risk mitigation with the positive promotion of children's cultural rights, as recognised by Article 31 UNCRC. A child-friendly film industry should therefore combine protective measures with proactive strategies to ensure access to diverse, high-quality, and inclusive content. This includes supporting educational uses of audiovisual media,



encouraging co-viewing practices, and fostering children's active participation as cultural actors rather than passive consumers.

4.1.2. Policy Recommendations

Building on these findings, the following policy recommendations aim to support the development of a child-friendly and competitive digital film industry. The recommendations are addressed to policymakers, regulatory authorities, industry stakeholders, educational institutions, and families, and are articulated across short-, medium-, and long-term horizons.

- **Recommendation 1: Embed children's rights by design and by default in digital audiovisual services**

The research demonstrates that reliance on ex post remedies is insufficient to protect children in data-driven audiovisual environments. Children's rights must be embedded structurally in the design and operation of digital services.

Short-term actions:

- Require high-privacy and parental control settings by default for child users, including the deactivation of profiling, behavioural tracking and targeted advertising unless demonstrably justified in the child's best interests.
- Ensure that algorithmic recommendation systems used in film services offer non-personalised or minimally personalised alternatives for minors.

Medium-term actions:

- Develop soft-law guidelines at EU level.
- Promote fairness-by-design and privacy-by-default standards specifically tailored to minors, including limits on persuasive interface design and dark patterns.

Long-term actions:

- Integrate children's rights impact assessments as a mandatory component of the development and deployment of AI-driven systems in the film industry.

- **Recommendation 2: Strengthen age-appropriate transparency and explainability**

The opacity of data processing and recommendation systems undermines children's autonomy and prevents meaningful parental oversight.

Short-term actions:



- Introduce layered and age-appropriate transparency tools using plain language, visual cues, and icons to explain data processing and content recommendation practices.
- Require platforms to disclose the main criteria driving personalised recommendations for child users.

Medium-term actions:

- Encourage the development of standardised transparency formats for children and parents, aligned with cognitive development stages.

Long-term actions:

- Promote explainable AI standards that explicitly account for children's cognitive and emotional development.

- **Recommendation 3: Rethink parental controls as participatory and educational tools**

Parental controls should enable informed parental engagement rather than functioning as a mere technical firewall.

Short-term actions:

- Require child accounts to adopt opt-in rather than opt-out models for data-intensive features.
- Ensure granular filtering options, transparent age-classification criteria and easy-to-use reporting tools.

Medium-term actions:

- Promote co-viewing functionalities, shared watchlists and parental guidance notes designed to foster dialogue between parents and children.
- Support awareness campaigns aimed at improving parental digital literacy.

Long-term actions:

- Integrate parental control tools within broader educational strategies that recognise families as active partners in children's digital upbringing.
- **Recommendation 4: Reinforce cooperation between the European film industry and the educational systems**



The cultural and educational potential of audiovisual content is central to children's rights to participation, expression, and development.

Short-term actions:

- Encourage partnerships between VOD service providers, schools, and cultural institutions to provide curated access to high-quality, age-appropriate content.
- Support school-based initiatives such as film clubs and thematic screenings.

Medium-term actions:

- Develop platform-integrated educational materials aligned with national curricula and media literacy objectives.
- Promote European and independent productions that reflect cultural diversity and social values.

Long-term actions:

- Embed audiovisual media literacy within national education systems as a core competence, in cooperation with industry and civil society.

- **Recommendation 5: Enhance monitoring, auditing, and enforcement mechanisms**

Effective protection of children requires robust oversight mechanisms that go beyond formal compliance.

Short-term actions:

- Strengthen regulatory cooperation between data protection authorities, audiovisual regulators and consumer protection bodies.
- Ensure that auditing processes include expertise on children's rights.

Medium-term actions:

- Develop child-specific indicators for monitoring algorithmic risks and content exposure in the film industry.

Long-term actions:

- Establish a coordinated EU-level framework for monitoring children's rights in digital cultural industries, ensuring consistency across the EU Member States.



REBOOT (www.thereboot-project.eu) has received funding from European Union's Horizon Europe Research and Innovation programme under Grant Agreement No. 101094769.



These recommendations converge on the need to shift from reactive, consent-based protection to a preventive, child-centred governance model. A competitive digital film industry can and should coexist with robust safeguards for children's rights, provided that protection, empowerment, and cultural participation are treated as mutually reinforcing objectives.

4.2. European Film Awards and Festivals

4.2.1. Key Findings

The work presented here covers WP5 and WP3, Tasks 3.2, 3.6, 5.1 and 5.2 led by JYU and channelled in Deliverables D3.1, D5.1, and D5.2. The analysis confirms the EU's long-established strategy of excluding the audiovisual sector from trade obligations in its external trade policy. At the same time, audiovisual cooperation provisions, which are well-integrated into the EU's external relations and the agreements entered into with third countries, contain elements that can help enhance the positioning of European films in foreign markets. Similarly, such elements are found in EU funding schemes for the audiovisual sector, currently the MEDIA strand of the Creative Europe Programme. These elements include capacity-building, exchanges and mobility for European audiovisual professionals in third countries; the promotion of co-productions between the EU, its Member States, and third countries; incentives for the production, promotion and distribution of European audiovisual works in third countries; cooperation in international fora; regulatory cooperation and compliance with the EU audiovisual acquis; and policy dialogue on audiovisual issues.

However, the analysis also shows that there is much untapped potential in terms of enhancing the internationalisation of the European audiovisual industry and its competitiveness while safeguarding cultural diversity. Audiovisual cooperation agreements included in EU international agreements with third countries across the globe have, for the most part, remained dead letters. There has not been much support for their implementation and consolidation, and they have not been backed by adequately-supported implementation structures and predictable financial resources. EU funding for the audiovisual sector through Creative Europe MEDIA strand has sought to enhance the internationalisation of the industry by supporting co-production, promotion, and cooperation between EU Member States and third countries. Yet, the programme has not sufficiently incorporated across its various actions an explicit international outlook. While Creative Europe has contributed to internationalisation, support for key areas, such as global sales and distribution, remains insufficiently developed.



4.2.1.1. Young Audience Award

According to the European Film Academy, the Young Audience Award (YAA) is designed for young people on the border to adolescence and puberty, who are still drawn to youth films but no longer to children's films. Until 2023, the award was selected by young people between the ages of 12 and 14. Since then, however, the age range has increased to 19. Most of the 11 awarded films between 2012 and 2022 can be classified as "youth films", though some are suitable for younger audiences. Importantly, many are not limited to youth but appeal to wider age groups, with stories about young people narrated in ways that engage adults too. The 12–14-year-old jury members seem to value films with substance. Thematic analysis revealed three overlapping themes: coming of age, belonging, and social challenges. All winners address social issues, sometimes with humour, and even adventurous films touch on sensitive topics such as mental health and suicide. As is typical for youth films, all winners depict growing up and responsibility, often in family and school contexts. Despite thematic similarities, the films vary in narrative and style.

Adult jury members participate in the first selection phase, and until 2018 they chose nominees directly. Thus, winners cannot be seen as purely reflecting young audiences' tastes. Still, across the competition's history, content and style remain consistent. Research indicates dramas dominate, with young juries favouring realistic, contemporary stories over action-packed adventures. Adult influence may explain the prevalence of serious content. Dutch is the most common language, appearing in four films, followed by French in three. The success of Dutch films may reflect the country's strong children's film policy.

4.2.1.2. LUX European Audience Film Award

The European Parliament launched the LUX Film Prize in 2007. In 2020 it was rebranded as the LUX European Audience Film Award, with winners chosen through equal weighting of public votes and parliamentary ratings. The analysis of the style and content of LUX-winning films shows that they tend to be contemporary dramas dealing with serious social and societal issues. The transformation of LUX into an audience award did not significantly impact the content or style of the winning films. The analysis of LUX-winning film competitiveness shows that an increase in one promotional indicator likely increases the others. However, some non-economic promotional indicators did not consistently show a statistically significant correlation with the others. This suggests that economic and non-economic promotional indicators are not necessarily aligned. The findings suggest that the transformation of LUX into an audience award did not significantly impact



its competitiveness. A comparison with European Palme d'Or and Oscar Best International Feature Film winners shows that LUX winners are not competitive in the global or European film scenes.

4.2.1.3. European Union Film Festivals

The EU Film Festivals (EUFFs) are events implemented by EU Delegations in third countries. The study on EUFFs showed that the initiative is characterised by a complex organisational structure involving both high-level official actors and local film festival organisations and associations, which usually take on the practical organisational responsibilities and compensate for the lack of film expertise in the EU Delegation and the embassies and other representations of the EU Member States. In line with the objectives of the EU, the discourses of the festival programmes typically emphasise European values such as democracy, freedom, equality, human rights and diversity. Alongside the films and the festival discourses, the side events support such an agenda. However, side events are typically based on one-way exchanges.

The organisation of EUFFs is a balancing act between different objectives. This balancing act seeks to combine the rationales of supporting the film industry and using film for various social and societal activities, such as strengthening intercultural dialogue and international cultural relations. Our analysis revealed the ambiguity of the diplomatic discourses and practices involved in the EUFFs, ranging from the top-down approach typical of traditional cultural diplomacy to a strong people-to-people approach. The analysis of the seven films that either had the most screenings at the case EUFFs or were among the most requested films from the film repository showed that EUFFs films are audience-friendly dramas or comedy dramas that deal with even serious issues in an uplifting and hopeful manner.

4.2.1.3. Young People's Preferences

Based on a survey across nine countries: Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain and Türkiye, a study was conducted with the aim of exploring how European young people (aged 12 to 24) engage with the EFI. This research, related to WP5, T5.2 and led by JYU, examined the influence of country, gender, viewing frequency, and film education on genre preferences, as well as attitudes toward film diversity, language, and production. Findings show that most young people watch films weekly or monthly, with nearly one tenth watching daily. Cinema remains important, though streaming services are preferred, followed by cinema and then television. Recommendations from family, friends, social media, and trailers strongly influence film choices. US productions dominate favourite film lists, with Harry Potter the most popular, though recently watched films include more European titles, especially domestic productions in France and Italy.



Comedy, action, drama, romance, and adventure are the most preferred genres, while Westerns, musicals, war, anime, and documentaries are the least popular. Preferences vary by country, age, gender, and education: younger audiences favour horror, males prefer war and sci-fi, females lean toward romance and drama, and non-binary respondents show stronger interest in anime and thrillers. Film education broadens tastes, especially for drama and animation.

Young people value film topics most, followed by narratives, emotions, actors, and soundtracks. Actors are considered more important than filmmakers, though appreciation for filmmakers grows with age and education. Nearly half of the respondents have received some form of film education, with significant national differences. About a quarter actively produce and share videos, mainly via smartphones on Instagram and TikTok, often in English. Overall, young Europeans watch mainly US films but also engage with domestic cinema. They appreciate diversity and identity in film characters, though many still prefer characters similar to themselves. European cinema remains less visible, highlighting the need for stronger promotion to youth audiences.

4.2.2. Policy Recommendations

Young Audience Award (YAA)

Despite the limited scope of the study, the analysis of the YAA films and their awarding practices brought forth several policy implications for the European Film Academy and the European Commission, as one of its financiers:

- **Recommendation 1: Improve communication about the YAA**

The YAA has great potential to advance the genre of youth film and the notion of young people as an important audience segment for European cinema. This potential can be fulfilled through better public communication and promotion of the YAA itself and the awarded films. The EU's long-term support for promotion activities is needed.

- **Recommendation 2: Use the YAA more effectively to boost young people's engagement with European cinema**

The European Film Academy has already taken steps to expand the YAA initiative by enabling teenagers aged 15–19 to get involved via the European Film Club. The pedagogical material of the YAA could be developed into a European-level film literacy learning programme that utilises lessons learned from previous film literacy programmes created in European.

- **Recommendation 3: Improve the availability of YAA films through VoD services**



The YAA-winners have attracted mostly domestic audiences while the admissions in other European countries have been minimal. Better access through VoD services, or the European Film Club, could increase their recognition and social and economic impact.

- **Recommendation 4: Make the YAA films more accessible via translation**

YAA films could reach bigger audiences through multilingual subtitles and/or dubbing. It is recommended that the EU support this process, as it does with the films awarded the LUX European Audience Film Award. Multilingual subtitling promotes linguistic and cultural diversity in Europe.

LUX European Audience Film Award

Analysis of the LUX prize indicates several policy implications for the European Parliament, European Film Academy, and the European Commission:

- **Recommendation 5: Improve the promotion of the LUX Award**

The prize itself should be promoted more effectively to make it more visible and to arouse public interest. At the moment it is promoted on the European Parliament's website and social media (Facebook) page as well as on the websites of the selected cinemas that arrange LUX Film Days screenings. However, the general public does not follow these sites widely. As we noted above, people cannot vote if they do not know that such an award exists. Other channels of promotion should therefore be explored.

- **Recommendation 6: Highlight LUX Award's aim to involve citizens**

There are not many audience awards in Europe, so this fact should be turned into an attraction for this initiative. Currently, the votes of the audience and European Parliament carry equal weight. However, we recommend reconsidering the voting system, given that the audience significantly outnumbers the Members of the Parliament (MEPs). For example, in 2025, 33,000 ratings were given, whereas there are only 720 MEPs. Citizen participation could be strengthened by increasing the weight of the audience vote or even changing the award to be entirely audience-based.

- **Recommendation 7: Make the nominated films better available for viewing**

To enable the participation of a greater number of people during the voting phase, the nominated films should be made better available for viewing. We propose to organise screenings of the films in more cities. This would also allow for more effective promotion of the award and the films at local level. It would be worth exploring where else besides cinemas belonging to the Europa Cinemas Network the films could be screened. For example, cultural institutions and educational



establishments that already organise cultural events could be suitable venues for screening LUX awarded films.

- **Recommendation 8: Improving distribution and streaming**

The international distribution of the award-winning films through cinemas and streaming services should be improved. Some resources should be put into developing distribution strategies for the winning films.

European Union Film Festivals (EUFFs)

Analysis of the EUFFs and various rationales included in it brought forth several policy implications for the European External Action Service supporting the EUFFs initiative, European Commission, EU Delegations, and Cineurope, which facilitates the film repository for these festivals. Policy recommendations include:

- **Recommendation 9: Communicate the EUFF objectives continuously**

Clearly define and communicate the objectives of the EUFFs to EU Member States in order to build consensus and shared ownership, highlighting the importance of mutuality and the need to eschew instrumentalism.

- **Recommendation 10: Frame the EUFFs within broader public diplomacy efforts**

Better emphasise and clarify for festival organisers the international cultural relations approach in the implementation of the EUFFs.

- **Recommendation 11: Focus on shared values**

In promotional materials supporting the EUFFs, focus on shared values rather than on 'EU values' to avoid the perception of neocolonialism.

- **Recommendation 12: Support the engagement of independent film professionals and cultural workers**

Financial support for independent professionals (from both EU and third countries) is crucial for their engagement. Such support is in line with the promotion of European values such as cultural diversity and equality.

- **Recommendation 13: Improve two-way exchanges and highlight side events**

Develop the EUFFs to better support two-way exchanges between EU and non-EU film professionals, allowing non-EU professionals to visit the EU, support the screening of non-EU films



at film festivals in Europe, aim to systematically include local films in the EUFFs programmes to promote balance and inclusion, and transform side events into dialogues, supporting co-learning, collaboration and co-productions and using films as a basis for discussions on common challenges.

- **Recommendation 14: Develop tailored audience engagement, addressing cultural? Diversity**

Develop strategies to engage with existing and new audiences, and improve festival design accordingly. Address cultural? diversity in communications materials to better reflect societal values and inclusivity.

- **Recommendation 15: Increase funding for Cineuropa and EU delegations**

Provide more financial support to the EU delegations and Cineuropa to increase the number and diversity of films in the repository and at the festivals, and to cover costs in low-income markets.

- **Recommendation 16: Consider broader indicators in implementation monitoring**

Use non-quantitative and non-market indicators to measure the impact of the EUFFs, including cultural and social outcomes, both in Cineuropa's collection of information and when assessing the implementation of the festivals, avoiding short-term analysis of results.

- **Recommendation 17: Continue to focus on films that have only a limited distribution outside Europe**

Cineuropa should continue to include in the repository films that are not widely distributed in third countries, because this strategy increases the visibility of a great number of middlebrow European films.

Young People Engagement

Analysing the survey data on young people's film preferences, viewing habits and film-making revealed several gaps in how young people are involved in today's film scene. It also revealed weaknesses in young people's engagement with the EFI and in the governance of such engagement. We have formulated these observations into key policy recommendations for various stakeholders in the EFI and professionals working with young people. These recommendations are organised by the target audience.

- **Recommendation 19: Increasing funding for youth-led productions and the visibility of European films among young people**



The European Commission could increase young people's interest in European films during their early teenage years by funding youth-led productions through the Creative Europe MEDIA strand. The European Commission could increase the visibility of European films among young people on social media by collaborating with content creators and influencers to review and promote European films. The same applies to national agencies such as film institutes and foundations. Additionally, the European Commission could establish Youth Film Ambassador programmes to promote European films in schools and online.

- **Recommendation 20: National policymakers could set up youth councils**

National policymakers could set up youth councils, where young people could suggest the types of films they would like to see. This information could be collected through film education, art, or other relevant classes and clubs in schools, for example. These views could then be presented to film professionals and policymakers.

- **Recommendation 21: Every European country should have a national film education plan**

Watching a national or other European film at least once a school year in a cinema should be included in the school curriculum at primary, secondary and upper secondary level.

- **Recommendation 22: Industry professionals should create more opportunities for young people to watch subtitled films**

This would improve their language skills and familiarity with multilingual environments, reflecting today's social reality in Europe and beyond.

- **Recommendation 23: Film educators and professionals working with young people should pay particular attention to gender aspects**

They should encourage young people to watch films in diverse genres, directed by both female and male directors, including diverse characters, and to discuss their observations and viewing experiences with their peers. These discussions should be guided by educators committed to equality.

- **Recommendation 24: More efficient, more participatory, and pedagogically inspiring film education is needed**

Such education should aim to give young people a comprehensive understanding of film as an art form, a part of European and global human heritage, a societal arena for discussion and an industry.



4.3. Child-Friendly Industry

4.3.1. Key Findings

The report on a child-friendly film industry, namely Deliverable 5.6, addresses the role of youth in the EFI with a comprehensive and integrated approach that acknowledges the agency of young people, their inclusion as well as their rights. Combining policy analysis, findings from focus groups with children and young adults as well as conceptual literature discussion, the report is concerned with the significance youth holds in the active shaping of European audiovisual industries, interacting with the medium in manifold ways that overlap: as film audiences, as film creators, as well as ‘third ways’ of engagement, remixing and modifying films and driving discussion. In this context, we employ three distinct conceptual frameworks – the child as citizen, consumer and user – to develop a comprehensive analytical approach to children’s interactions within cultural, digital and media contexts. The concept of child-friendliness serves as an overarching lens that critically examines adult-dominated cultural policy paradigms and advocates for governance structures that prioritise inclusion, agency and accountability.

As global cultural stakeholders, which is how we conceptualise youth in the context of the EFI, children and young adults shared similar opinions across national and cultural borders. Regarding audiovisual content, children and young adults value authentic stories, both in which they see themselves represented on screen and in which realities different from their own are represented. As young film creators, there is and has been a new production paradigm: Accessible equipment, in the form of e.g., mobile phone cameras, autodidactic creation and online distribution ultimately suggest a democratisation of video- and filmmaking.

4.3.2. Policy Recommendations

Based on the policy analysis and the focus group analysis, the report pointed out significant gaps towards the development of a European child-friendly film industry. These factors are presented following as policy recommendations for policy actors and stakeholders in the EFI:

Educational Institutions and Educators

- **Recommendation 1: Implementation of media literacy into educational institutions**

Media literacy is important to be part of the school curriculum starting from young ages, aiming to foster and develop young people’s skills and to acquire knowledge, to be able to navigate challenges, to develop a critical perspective towards content, platforms, data, companies and to enable accessibility to media’s multiple opportunities, ensuring their protection of their safety and



rights at the same time. It is necessary that educators have updated knowledge to support and teach students. We advocate for a media literacy course to be part of compulsory primary school.

- **Recommendation 2: Film education as a policy field of action**

Media literacy rightfully has a prominent place in the EU's cultural programmes. Educational institutions should also be spaces for – at least having the possibility to – learning filmmaking skills and especially to experiment creatively, encouraging skill acquisition for youth that goes beyond applicability in the job market. Oftentimes, creative careers seem unapproachable for young people without any connections into creative industries. Combined with collaborative programmes with industry professionals, this could work as a tool to tear down rigid boundaries of creative industries, in this case specifically the EFI, which still are exclusive and exclusionary to outsiders, especially young creatives without industry connections.

'Youth-produced Films' as Policy Priority

- **Recommendation 3: Support and funding for young film creators**

For the European Union, media literacy is a key priority in cultural policy. The lack of support systems for young people entering the EFI fails to acknowledge the reality of autodidactic, truly original filmmaking in Europe and funnels it into opportunities for young creatives to be recognised as (future) key players in the EFI. Supporting youth-led film production requires the establishment and expansion of specialised funding at both national and European levels for audiovisual content created by young people. Policymakers should facilitate the broadening of reach of youth-created films, e.g., through international partnerships or the establishing of distinct categories on VoD services.

Data and Privacy exploitation of Children

- **Recommendation 4: Platforms should provide clear and default settings to protect children's privacy and prohibit personalised advertising**

VoD service providers should not allow tracking and profiling of children's accounts, being by default deactivated, providing settings that are in a child-friendly language, allowing the users to actively take privacy decisions and obtaining parental consent in an explicit and direct way. Parents should receive notifications when tracking and profiling are being activated. VoD service providers should prohibit personalised advertising and ban any elements that invite children to share their data, such as fake countdowns and cookies.



- **Recommendation 5: Public authorities must oversight algorithm and AI's implementation in VoD services**

Independent and public actors must monitor how platforms use algorithms and AI to ensure the prohibition of harmful functions and compliance by the VoD service providers with regulations to protect the rights and welfare of children.

Role of parents

- **Recommendation 6: Support parents with media literacy skills and awareness, as well as with guidelines how to secure privacy protection on digital services**

Education programmes for parents are important to provide them with necessary knowledge and skills to be aware of their own privacy risks and protection measures, and also ways to support their children and media users. They need to be proactively engaged with privacy risks and not ignore or be passive with their children as digital users.

4.4. Mapping and EU law of institutional models for the promotion of the EFI

4.4.1. Key Findings

This section describes the work carried out for Tasks 3.4 and 3.5 by ELIAMEP, ULIEGE and other participating partners within Work Package 3, culminating in deliverable D3.5. Part A of the final report related to the mapping and EU law of institutional models for the promotion of the EFI (D3.5) examined public practices in eight EU Member States – Denmark, Finland, France, Sweden, Poland, Italy, Spain, and Greece – regarding the promotion of their national film industries and the broader EFI abroad. It mapped the mechanisms and strategies in place, identifying their characteristics, complementarities, and limitations. The analysis confirmed that EU Member States remain the main actors in international film promotion, using institutional mechanisms embedded in cultural, economic, and diplomatic strategies, alongside bilateral, regional, and international collaborations operating in parallel with European frameworks.

Part B of this report examined and assessed whether, and, if so, how, EU law and policies promote European audiovisual works and film beyond the borders of the EU. It did so by mapping the policies and instruments in place and identifying their characteristics, complementarity, enablers, and limitations in enhancing the internationalisation of European audiovisual works. It focused on agreements the EU has negotiated with third countries and regions with regard to trade facilitation



and audiovisual cooperation. It also examined EU funding instruments for the AV sector and external action.

4.4.2. Policy Recommendations

The policy recommendations derived from the analysis of EU law and policies aim to enhance the internationalisation of European audiovisual works by putting in place a coherent, well-resourced, and outward-looking EU framework that combines cultural diversity with global competitiveness.

- **Recommendation 1: Develop a comprehensive strategy for the internationalisation of European audiovisual works and the EFI**

Design an overarching and coherent EU strategy dedicated to the internationalisation of European audiovisual works, while continuing to uphold the ‘audiovisual exception’ in EU trade policy as a non-negotiable tool to safeguard cultural diversity. A comprehensive internationalisation-oriented strategy should build on the policy space created by the ‘audiovisual exception’ and should align cultural, audiovisual, and external action policies to strengthen the competitiveness of European audiovisual works. In particular, it should bring together audiovisual cooperation with third countries and dedicated funding tools.

- **Recommendation 2: Strengthen the outward orientation of Creative Europe**

Maintain Creative Europe’s internal focus and its emphasis on the objectives of competitiveness and cultural diversity, but reinforce its global ambition. This could be achieved through support actions under the Media strand that explicitly target international sales, distribution, and promotion activities in third markets, as well as through actions that foster the global circulation of European audiovisual works across both theatrical and VoD services. Consideration should also be given to expanding Creative Europe’s support for policy dialogue with a focus on the internationalisation of European audiovisual works and policy cooperation with third countries.

- **Recommendation 3: Operationalise audiovisual cooperation provisions in EU agreements**

Support audiovisual cooperation with third countries in order to strengthen the presence of European audiovisual works and film in the respective markets by earmarking financial resources for the implementation of relevant audiovisual cooperation provisions; establishing dedicated implementation structures, and ensuring institutional oversight, monitoring, follow-up and evaluation of cooperation practices.



4.5. European Film Professionals and Understandings Towards the International Market

4.5.1. Key Findings

The findings presented in this section relate to work carried out by ULIEGE and participating partners on WP4, more specifically on Task 4.1 and Deliverable 4.1, which examined how European film professionals understand and experience the EFI, with a particular focus on the notions of competitiveness and the international market. It was based on extensive desk research of academic, policy, and industrial literature. To this end 37 semi-structured interviews with European film professionals conducted between January and August 2024, and a pan-European survey of 432 valid responses carried out between November 2024 and February 2025. Interviewees and survey respondents represented a wide range of professional roles across the audiovisual value chain.

Findings revealed that European film professionals do not define competitiveness primarily in economic terms. Instead, competitiveness is largely associated with cultural diversity, public support mechanisms, artistic freedom, and collaborative production models, particularly international co-productions.

The EFI is widely perceived as structurally fragmented, highly dependent on public funding, and strongly reliant on festivals and co-production networks for international circulation, while facing persistent challenges in distribution, visibility, and audience reach beyond national markets. US-based global VoD services are viewed ambivalently, recognised for their role in sustaining production during recent crises but increasingly criticised for opaque decision-making, concentration of intellectual property, and limited alignment with the long-term objectives of the EFI. AI emerges as an area of cautious experimentation, with professionals expressing both expectations regarding efficiency gains and concerns related to creative labour, trust and dependence on US-based technological companies.

4.5.2. Policy Recommendations

The policy recommendations derived from the analysis call for a redefinition of competitiveness in the EFI that reconciles economic objectives with cultural, social, and political values. Findings stressed the need for closer alignment between EU policy frameworks and bottom-up professional perspectives, greater coordination in international promotion strategies, strengthened support for distribution and audience development, and more proactive governance responses to VoD platforms to enhance the long-term sustainability and competitiveness of the EFI.



- **Recommendation 1: Incentivise early-stage marketing and audience development strategies**

Encourage integration of marketing and audience development strategies from the earliest stages of film development. This includes introducing targeted incentives and dedicated funding lines to support early marketing design, audience research, and collaboration between creative teams and marketing professionals throughout the production process. In parallel, the EU should strengthen cross-border audience development initiatives to improve the visibility and circulation of European films within and beyond the EU.

- **Recommendation 2: Strengthen EU-level promotion and pilot a shared European film brand**

Reinforce the pan-European promotion strategy by working more closely with existing structures such as European Film Promotion (EFP) and by developing complementary tools to increase the international visibility of European films. This could include piloting a light and flexible EU film brand, co-designed with EU-wide industry associations, producers, distributors, sales agents, exhibitors, and festivals, in order to reflect the diversity of the EFI and incorporate bottom-up professional perspectives. Such a brand and its associated promotional actions should be tested both in international markets and within the EU, with the aim of encouraging cross-border recognition among European audiences

- **Recommendation 3: Strengthen VoD regulation to protect independent production, improve transparency, and ensure fairer market conditions**

Strengthen the regulatory framework governing VoD services, notably in the context of the future revision of the AVMSD, in order to address structural imbalances affecting the EFI. Regulation should better safeguard intellectual property by ensuring that ownership remains with independent producers, reinforce transparency obligations requiring platforms to provide meaningful data on the performance and circulation of European works, and establish clear and enforceable prominence requirements to guarantee the effective visibility of European content on digital services. Such measures would contribute to rebalancing power relations between global VoD service providers and European professionals.

- **Recommendation 4: Redefine competitiveness through a value-based framework**

Adopt a broader and value-based definition of competitiveness that reflects the structural specificities, values and goals of the EFI. This requires moving beyond narrow economic indicators



(such as box-office performance or market share) and integrating criteria related to cultural diversity, public value, artistic freedom, independent production capacity, and the sustainability of small and medium-sized enterprises. Such a framework should be explicitly informed by bottom-up professional perspectives and recognise public support not as a corrective measure but as a foundational pillar of the EFI. This holistic understanding of competitiveness should guide EU policies across the audiovisual sector, including emerging regulatory areas such as VoD services and AI, ensuring that innovation and market regulation reinforce rather than undermine the distinctiveness of the EFI.

4.6. Understandings of Non-European Film Professionals Towards the International Market

4.6.1. Key Findings

This section reports on the activities undertaken by EUR and participating partners within WP4, specifically Task 4.3, resulting in Deliverable D4.4. The report examined the views of non-European film professionals, focusing in particular on six non-EU countries – Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, South Africa, South Korea, and Türkiye – regarding the EFI both generally and in terms of its presence in these six markets. It was based on extensive desk research of academic, policy and industrial literature, 99 semi-structured interviews with a wide range of non-European film professionals conducted from December 2023 to July 2025, and an international survey of 425 valid responses conducted between November 2024 and March 2025.

The report provides responses to questions such as: What do non-European film professionals understand by the EFI? What do they identify as its main strengths? In which outlets does European film tend to circulate? What are the main obstacles to the international distribution of European films in theatres and other channels? What are the main needs of the film ecosystem in the selected six markets? Are the programmes and incentives offered by the EU to support such film ecosystems relevant? How do non-European film professionals compare collaborations with European and with non-European international partners such as the USA, China or Russia?

The data uncovered, among other facts, that the EFI is: mostly associated with international co-productions (70.1%), *cinéma d'auteur* (69.8%), state support (60.8%), art cinema (60.5%), and cultural diversity (46%); respected for its cultural particularities but limited in its recognition among the wider public; recognised as the result of complex forms of state and European intervention and support that are burdensome in bureaucratic terms; dependent on traditional distribution formats



and limited in outreach and commercial success; failing to respond to strategic approaches that aim, arguably, to replace the centrality of Europe in the global film ecosystem.

4.6.2. Policy Recommendations

The analysis of the international understandings of the EFI brought forward several policy implications for the European Commission, EU Delegations and the European External Action Service (EEAS), of which a representative sample is included below to strengthen the international circulation of the EFI as well as relations between European and non-European film professionals and stakeholders (see Dâmaso et al, 2025; some of these recommendations are also extended in Dâmaso et al, 2026).

International co-productions

- **Recommendation 1: Update international co-production agreements**

Many co-production agreements are outdated vis-à-vis contemporary industry practices, systemic market changes, and ongoing technological developments such as streaming services.

- **Recommendation 2: Lower thresholds of co-production financing requirements**

Film professionals in Global South countries repeatedly complain of the high financing thresholds involved in co-productions with European countries, which are not compatible with national budgets.

- **Recommendation 3: Reinforce existing funding available to support international co-productions**

Existing funding for international co-productions should be strengthened to address challenges in film promotion and distribution across all participating countries, ensuring that co-producing states gain visibility and access to each other's markets.

- **Recommendation 4: Lower bureaucratic burdens**

To address bureaucratic challenges, regulations should be simplified, documentation standardised, and clear procedures established to facilitate cross-border film collaboration. A single, user-friendly, multilingual website could function as a gateway to consolidate information.

Film festivals

- **Recommendation 5: Reinforce and widen existing funding**

Towards the participation of non-European film professionals in EU festivals and market events and, conversely, the participation of EU film professionals in non-EU festivals and market events.



- **Recommendation 6: Establish funding mechanisms to cover or subsidise screening fees for selected European films**

This would enable their participation in international film festivals beyond Europe.

Exhibition and distribution

- **Recommendation 7: Develop new partnerships among publicly managed windows of exhibition**

The circulation of European films could be increased by strengthening cooperation between entities with publicly managed windows of exhibition across the case studies.

- **Recommendation 8: Develop new partnerships among publicly managed streaming services.**

Likewise, the EU could support cooperation between non-European publicly managed streaming services and similar European services.

- **Recommendation 9: Invest in long-term audience building.**

The EU could support cultural programmes directed at non-European children and young people to support cinema clubs and events showcasing European and non-European films.

European Programmes

- **Recommendation 10: Review and simplify current support schemes for the distribution and the promotion of European films**

Non-European stakeholders complain about the complexity of funding schemes, which limits the participation of independent and small distributors.

- **Recommendation 11: Revive programmes dedicated to distribution**

The EU could revive initiatives like Europa Cinema Mundus, which supported theatrical programming based on circulation and exchange between MEDIA countries and non-MEDIA member states, with a stronger focus on the digital dimension of distribution.

Modes of Working

- **Recommendation 12: Facilitate access to film archives by non-European stakeholders**

The EU could suggest that national archives create pricing schemes and that access costs are lowered to film professionals and entities from lower to middle-income countries.



- **Recommendation 2: Improve two-way exchanges**

Reinforce the screening of local non-EU films in European Film Festivals. This would create new exhibition channels for independent domestic films, strengthen cultural exchange, and build trust.

5. EUROPEAN UNION LEGISLATIVE REFORM PROPOSALS

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5.1. Key Findings

Audiovisual/cinematographic works and heritage have historically been key items in the EU's cultural policies and agenda. The significance of such works and heritage is deeply rooted in their multifaceted nature. From a market-oriented standpoint, audiovisual/cinematographic works are regarded as cultural goods that yield economic returns for their authors and other market actors involved in the pre-production, production, and post-production stages of the filmmaking lifecycle, as well as in the retail chain. From a cultural standpoint, audiovisual/cinematographic content represents the artistic expression and creativity of its authors, conveying a message to audiences across borders and time. Lastly, from a social standpoint, audiovisual/cinematographic works comprise tools that capture, document, and preserve the cultural identity, collective memory, imagery, shared history, and communal values of the society from which they originate; in addition, they serve to convey and transmit this information, knowledge and heritage from one generation to another.

The multiplicity of the features of audiovisual/cinematographic works and heritage require a detailed analysis of the policy and legal context that informs, shapes and governs the production, distribution and preservation of such content, especially given the abundance of policy documents and legislative instruments reflecting on these matters. Indeed, the founding treaties of the EU, specifically Article 26 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), reflects on 'the free movement of persons and products related to audiovisual activities'. This normative premise has underscored the Union policies advocating for 'a strong audiovisual industry [that is] able to compete with the large overseas industries in this field' (Resolution 86/C 320/04) and to



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foster creativity within Europe whilst reinforcing the common European identity within the EU and abroad (COM(2014) 272 final). Throughout this venture, the principle of cultural and linguistic diversity, as enshrined in Article 22 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (CFREU), has become the Union's compass down the path to achieve the market-driven and culturally- and socially-informed policy goals. This principle has, on the one hand, underpinned the EU policymakers' efforts to preserve the plurality of cultures and languages within the EU, as well as the endeavours to facilitate the engagement of European societies with the cultural and linguistic values and heritage of others. On the other hand, it has justified the policy measures and legislative instruments addressed to safeguard the European identity, culture and cultural heritage from the adverse impacts of economic globalisation and the influx of non-European cultural content, goods and services in the European cultural space and audiovisual market. In light of these objectives, the EU policymaker has prioritised promoting, distributing, and exhibiting European audiovisual/cinematographic content and heritage within the EU and across the borders of the Union.

In this regard, since the declaration of 1988 as the European Cinema and Television Year (Resolution 86/C 320/04), the EU policy and legal discourse has been enriched with a plethora of public policies focusing on different aspects of the sector, accompanied by several legislative instruments to achieve the policy objectives set forth therein, such as Council Directive 89/552/EEC (Television Without Frontiers Directive, TVWFD) (which was repealed in 2010), Directives 2010/13/EU (Audiovisual Media Services Directive, AVMSD), 2001/29/EC (Information Society Directive, InfoSoc Directive), Directive 2006/115/EC (Rental and Lending Directive, RLD), 2012/28/EU (Orphan Works Directive, OWD), and (EU) 2019/790 (Copyright in the Digital Single Market, CDSMD).

Based on these policy and legislative premises, Task 3.1, titled 'EU and Comparative Mapping of the Filmmaking Regulatory Framework', explored the impact of the EU policy and legal framework on the functioning and competitiveness of the EFI within the EU. It provided a comprehensive and multi-level mapping of the policies and legal norms that directly impact the filmmaking lifecycle within the EU, by mapping and analysing the EU and national policies and laws at the UN — specifically the UNESCO and the WIPO; WTO, CoE, EU and national levels. The topics explored in the context of Task 3.1 include, precisely:

(1) cultural diversity, as a general principle that guides the EU policies and legislation concerning the operation of the European AV sector and the EFI,

(2) copyright law, as one of the main legal disciplines that govern the production, distribution, exhibition and preservation of European audiovisual/cinematographic content,



(3) media law, due to constituting the primary legal discipline that presents the interplay of cultural diversity and access to and discoverability of European audiovisual/cinematographic works, and,

(4) the policy and legal framework regarding the protection of minors, given the REBOOT's project's focus on young audiences as the future policymakers, legislators, content creators, cinema professionals and audiences.

The policy recommendations that follow are extracted from D3.3, titled 'Policy recommendations', which offered a comparative analysis of the UN, WTO, CoE, EU and EU Member States copyright and media laws in order to assess the level of harmonisation achieved across Europe with respect to the key legal norms that inform, shape and govern the operations of the EFI. The areas considered to benefit from the intervention of EU, or national policymakers and legislators are channelled into a set of policy recommendations addressed to the authorities at the EU and national levels.

5.2. Policy Recommendations

EU Policymakers and Legislators

- **Recommendation 1: Harmonisation of the concept of 'authorship' for audiovisual/cinematographic works across the EU**

Legislative interventions at the EU level to harmonise the authorship of audiovisual/cinematographic works would establish a common understanding of authorship across Europe and enhance legal certainty. Furthermore, uniformity across Europe concerning the authorship of audiovisual/cinematographic works would facilitate the co-production agreements concluded between European film producers subject to different European copyright regimes while reducing the time and ancillary costs to determine the authors, rightsholders, and those entitled to exercise the economic and moral rights vested in the work in different EU Member States, as well as to tackle the contractual practices for the transfer of exploitation rights.

- **Recommendation 2: Harmonisation of the presumption of authorship of audiovisual/cinematographic works across the EU**

The EU legislator's endeavours to further advance the initiative of Directive 2004/48/EC (Intellectual Property Rights Enforcement Directive, IPRED) in this field and to uniform the presumption of authorship of audiovisual/cinematographic content would introduce certain advantages different from those initially envisioned by the IPRED. Whereas the IPRED is intended to facilitate the



exercise of IPRs by copyright owners, this new legislative intervention would facilitate CCIs, market actors, and the public's creative engagement with such works. Indeed, such a uniform presumption would, on the one hand, help identify the authors of a European audiovisual/cinematographic work whilst eliminating the complications posed by joint authorship. On the other hand, it would facilitate meeting specific requirements set by the exceptions and limitations (E&Ls) to copyright and related rights, such as indicating the names of the authors of European audiovisual/cinematographic works.

- **Recommendation 3: Introduction of incentives for and financial support to national voluntary databases compiling information on the authors and rightsholders of audiovisual/cinematographic works**

To address the legal hurdles stemming from the hardship in obtaining licenses for the reuse of copyright-protected works, it is suggested that the establishment of online and easily accessible voluntary databases compiling information on the authors and rightsholders of audiovisual/cinematographic works would be of significant help to film producers who wish to use or adapt copyright-protected works (e.g., books, scripts, music, images, photographs) to create new content. In this regard, an EU-level initiative to map ongoing national practices would be essential. Subsequently, building frameworks to enhance expertise and skills for establishing and maintaining such databases, as well as allocating financial incentives and a budget to operationalise these initiatives, are worthy of consideration by the EU policymaker.

- **Recommendation 4: Conceptualisation of 'audiovisual works' and 'cinematographic works' at the EU level**

'Audiovisual works' and 'cinematographic works' are key concepts for the European AV sector and the EFI. To enhance legal clarity and accessibility of the legal terminology and regulations crucial to the European AV sector and the EFI, these concepts could be defined at the Union level, thereby eliminating discrepancies across the national copyright regimes of the EU Member States. Such a harmonisation endeavour would also benefit the co-production agreements to be concluded between film producers subject to different national copyright regimes.

- **Recommendation 5: Streamlining the concepts of 'audiovisual works' and 'cinematographic works' in line with the CoE legal framework**

The legal mapping of the international, regional and supranational legal frameworks reveals that the network of legal instruments that inform and govern the operation of the European AV sector and the EFI uses several key terms, without necessarily streamlining the meanings attributed to these terms across these different corpora of laws.



Whereas the EU copyright *acquis* lacks clear-cut definitions of audiovisual and cinematographic works, it provides a definition for the concept of 'film'. Furthermore, audiovisual works and cinematographic works, aside from being key to the legal regulations concerning the operations of the European AV sector and the EFI, are often used interchangeably within the EU legal framework.

The CoE legal framework, on the other hand, relies on a set of concepts that partially overlap with those of the EU legal framework. The CoE legal framework acknowledges audiovisual works as an umbrella concept encompassing cinematographic works and films. Besides, the CoE framework uses concepts such as 'television films' and 'moving image materials'.

Once it is considered that the vast majority of EU Member States are also members of the CoE or signatories to the key CoE legislation encompassed herein, clarification of terminology used within the EU framework, in alignment with or by reference to the CoE terminology, would enhance legal clarity across Europe.

- **Recommendation 6: Reconsideration of harmonising the moral rights of authors, including the authors of audiovisual/cinematographic works across the EU**

The European AV sector and the EFI would significantly benefit from the EU legislator's intervention in harmonising author's moral rights. In the absence of an EU-wide regulation, the regulation of authors' moral rights varies from one country to another, creating legal uncertainty across Europe. A cross-national analysis of the copyright regimes of the selected EU Member States reveals legal fragmentation across Europe in the determination of the nature (i.e., waivable v. unwaivable), beneficiaries (i.e., natural and legal persons, heirs, assignees), and scope of moral rights. Besides, in the Member States where moral rights can be waived, the conditions for such practice vary, and the formulation of such conditions might use uncertain terminology, such as 'fair practices'. Last but not least, several EU Member States provide moral rights tailored to the authors of audiovisual/cinematographic works. Therefore, harmonisation of these rights would benefit not only the authors of audiovisual/cinematographic works, by having a better insight into their rights in different States, but also the film producers who wish to use copyright-protected works to produce original content or distributors who might need to modify certain aspects of the work for exploitation purposes.

- **Recommendation 7: Redefinition of screen and catalogue quotas to enhance access to and discoverability of European works**

The screen and catalogue quotas envisioned by the AVMSD are deemed by the European AV sector and the EFI to be essential tools for enabling and ensuring access to and discoverability of European



works. Nevertheless, the broad conceptualisation of 'European works', which does not necessarily differentiate national European works from non-national European works, as well as the opacity of the concept of the 'prominence of European works', hinders the efficacy of these tools. Furthermore, an overview of the selected EU Member States' strategies in implementing the relevant provisions of the AVMSD showcases significant differentiations in setting the transmission time and catalogue percentages, with minimum indicators on the ways in which to realise the 'prominence of European works' in the television broadcast programmes and VoD services' catalogues. Therefore, the European AV sector and the EFI could benefit from an evidence-based reconsideration of the screen and catalogue quotas, which would reflect on their past experiences of the industry and respond to their future expectations.

National Policymakers and Legislators

- **Recommendation 1: Reconsideration of harmonising the related rights granted to the producers of first fixations of films**

The legal mapping conducted across a sample of EU Member States reveals that, whereas the economic rights vested in copyright are significantly harmonised across Europe, the related rights of producers of the first fixations of films could benefit from further harmonisation at the national level.

- **Recommendation 2: Reconsideration of the (further) harmonisation of the E&Ls that are essential for the European AV sector and the EFI at the national level**

The European copyright *acquis* consists of a multitude of E&L to copyright and related rights that facilitate the production of new audiovisual/cinematographic works and the preservation of Europe's cinematographic heritage, while reducing the time and costs required to seek authorisation from authors and/or rightsholders of legally protected content. Whereas the cross-national and comparative analysis conducted herein is limited to a sample of EU Member States, the results of such an analysis showcase that the E&Ls for ephemeral recording, incidental inclusion, quotation, freedom of panorama, caricature, parody and pastiche, and the preservation of cultural heritage have been implemented differently across Europe. Such a fragmentation across the European legal landscape not only risks legal certainty but also paves the way for film producers' scepticism toward the legal tools inherent in the EU and national copyright regimes, especially in the case of multi-national productions. Therefore, the European AV sector and the EFI would drastically benefit from a harmonious European copyright regime, particularly a harmonious system of E&Ls to copyright and related rights.



- **Recommendation 3: Introduction of incentives and financial support to national initiatives and databases listing the works that have fallen into the public domain**

Establishing a pan-European public domain through a horizontal regulatory intervention might be a challenging task, given that such an endeavour shall be complemented by an ambitious copyright reform that unifies the originality criterion for copyright protection, term of protection, works and other subject-matter allocated to the public domain. Nevertheless, allocating the financial sources available to national authorities to establish databases, strictly of an administrative nature, would facilitate identifying and tracking the legal status of works and other subject-matter by film producers, particularly documentary filmmakers.

- **Recommendation 4: Strengthening legal enforcement over online sharing platforms**

It is essential to secure a EU legislative framework that extends its scope from the current primary reliance on self-regulation to one that enables the proper enforcement and implementation of adopted regulations across the EU Member States via concrete measures, such as the setting out of a range of obligations for online sharing platforms aimed at ensuring the accountability of the said providers and the protection of minors. These comprise transparent mechanisms for monitoring regulation implementation and providing corresponding sanctions and coercive measures for non-compliance with the regulations in force.

- **Recommendation 5: Reinforcement of AI literacy amongst youth/minors**

Children could be equipped with critical and technical skills, which enable them to develop the ability to identify deceitful AI-generated content and protect their right to privacy, while navigating an AI-driven media landscape. Although media literacy has been incorporated into compulsory education, it does not sufficiently strengthen students' competencies to meet real-world challenges, especially given the rapid technological developments and the implementation of AI. Therefore, an up-to-date media literacy, which includes AI literacy skills, needs to be implemented in compulsory education in an age-appropriate way.



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6. CONCLUSION

This project deliverable, namely *D6.3 - Integrated policy recommendations and EU Film 2030 Agenda*, is the final output of the REBOOT project. Designed as a collaborative work, D6.3 is dedicated to presenting the research endeavours, key findings, and scientific outputs of the substantive WPs of the project. Accordingly, it presented the various topics explored by the REBOOT Consortium over the course of the project timeline and provided insight into the comprehensive research tasks it performed.

The deliverable, first and foremost, provided an overview of the REBOOT project. Subsequently, it systematically and thematically presented the research outcomes of WPs 2 to 6 under three main titles and sections: (1) Socio-economic indicators and measurement tools for policymaking, (2) gaps and enablers in policymaking, and (3) legislative reforms proposals.

Aligned with the EU's audiovisual media policies and strategy, the research undertaken by the REBOOT Consortium, hence the aforementioned sections, encompassed a multitude of topics, encompassing: policy-driven quantitative data from both economic and social standpoints, the young audiences of European audiovisual media, perspectives of European and non-European film professionals on the competitiveness of the EFI within the international audiovisual market, the legal fragmentation across Europe due to the national implementation strategies of the EU copyright and media norms by the EU Member States, as well as the EU policies and norms devised for the protection of minors. Each section provided, first, the key findings of the research undertaken by the REBOOT Consortium, and then, listed a set of policy recommendations for a future-proof European Film Agenda.

Presenting the REBOOT Consortium's venture since February 2023 until January 2026 and the resolutions of the REBOOT project in a consolidated document, this deliverable is expected to contribute to the policy debates and legal discourse regarding the status and the future competitiveness of the EFI within and across the borders of the EU. Therefore, as per the Open Science policies of the EU, it is disseminated online via open-access platforms and databases to foster engagement among various stakeholders and interested parties with the information encapsulated herein and to open the floor to prospective conversations on the future trajectories of the EFI.



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