



Report on young people's preferences

Project: Reviving, Boosting, Optimising and Transforming European Film Competitiveness - REBOOT

Grant Agreement: 101094796 - HORIZON-CL2-2022-HERITAGE-01

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Object D5.1 Report on young people's preferences

WP	WP5 (University of Vienna)
Deliverable Lead	University of Jyväskylä
Type	R=report
Dissemination Level	PU= public
Version	1.0



Funded by the
European Union

Metadata

Project	Reviving, Boosting, Optimising and Transforming European Film Competitiveness - REBOOT
Acronym	REBOOT
Programme	Horizon Europe
Call	HORIZON-CL2-2022-HERITAGE-01
Grant Agreement No.	101094796
Project coordinator	Katharine Sarikakis (UNIVIE)
Licensing terms	CC-BY 4.0
DOI	https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17466239
Author(s)	Kaisa Hiltunen, Tuuli Lähdesmäki (JYU) Katharine Sarikakis, Angeliki Chatziefraimidou, Simon Haslauer (UNIVIE)
Reviewer(s)	Antonios Vlassis (ULIEGE), Alicja Waszkiewicz-Raviv (UW)
Title	Report on young people's preferences
Deliverable No.	D5.1
WP No.	5
Deliverable Lead	University of Jyväskylä
Type	Report
Dissemination Level	Public
Version	1.0
Description	T5.2: Survey on young people's film preferences in Europe (months 13–18). Leading partner: JYU 6 PM. Participating partners: UNIVIE 9PM; UGENT 3PM; ELIAMEP 2PM; UCM 2PM; SSSA 3PM; UCA 2PM; UW 3PM.



	The online survey aimed to grasp young people's film preferences in partner countries. The respondents were selected among students in secondary and university education (12–24-year-olds). Approximately half of the participants were secondary school students and the other half, university students. Each national dataset aimed to include at least 500 responses. The participants for the survey were recruited through institutions of learning, including the partner universities. The research sample reflects the diversity of the population in terms of gender and residence. The survey included questions (multiple-choice and free-form) on preferred genres, favourite and last seen films; their country of origin, linguistic and cultural preferences, and basic background information. A protocol was submitted to the competent ethics committee for approval. The protocol included the information sheet, privacy information on data management, and informed consent templates, ensuring volunteers' right to withdraw and exercise their data, with specific attention to children as research participants. Methods: Online survey in several partner countries in servers sited in the EU, GDPR compliant; adult participants were directly recruited, unless parents' consent was required by the national framework; statistical analysis, including crosstabulation and chi-square tests, and qualitative content analysis
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	of national data were applied; and cross-analysis of national datasets were managed for results.
Keywords	survey, young people, film preferences, viewing habits, filmmaking, linguistic and cultural differences, European film
Language	English



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THE REBOOT PROJECT SUMMARY

This project aims to connect 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, firstly, 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. Secondly, the project aspires to actively prepare for future 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 engage with in the coming decades as makers and consumers, as well as industry and policy leaders. Therefore, the consortium interrogates not only "what is" but also "what has been" and "what will be" from fresh perspectives.

REBOOT's ambition is to provide a full set of knowledge of the European film industry, which maximises its existing strengths, combined with strategic and tactical dimensions of action to optimise the potential held in European youth publics, 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.



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



1 INTRODUCTION

The future development and competitiveness of the European film industry (EFI) depends on young people and their interest in film as an art form, cultural and social asset, commerce and economic activity. Young people are not only the future consumers and audiences of European film, but also its future creators, producers and policymakers. Today, many young people can be characterised as digital natives, often with strong international outlooks, multilingual abilities and multicultural experiences. They represent a generation whose habits, values and choices will shape the trajectory of the EFI. At the same time, children and young people must be seen not only as viewers and makers of film, but also as contributors to and cultural ambassadors for the broader cultural fabric of Europe. In other words, young people can play a key role in shaping the institutions and practices through which European societies may seek to promote humanistic values of cultural diversity, inclusion and democracy. This report is written with a view to the future of the EFI, from the perspective of future audiences, creators and industry leaders.

Although to an analyst of the film industry young people represent the future of the EFI, they also have an important role in this industry as young audiences now. The past few decades have witnessed a rise in sociologically oriented research on childhood and youth (James & Prout, 1997; Mayall, 2002; Tisdall & Punch, 2012). This research orientation has emphasised children's and young people's agency and social roles and advanced an understanding of children and young people as *beings in contrast to becomings* (Cockburn, 2013; Hanson, 2017), that is, as subjects in their own right instead of merely individuals in the process of growing up (Qvortrup, 1994). This research orientation challenges strict views about the role of the child often found in developmentalist and educational perspectives, by seeking to understand children's experiences of and effects on the social realities that they live in (Lähdesmäki et al., 2022; Sarikakis et. al 2025).

The REBOOT project has shown that even initiatives designed to support young people's agency in the EFI often end up reflecting adults' assumptions about what is appropriate or desirable, rather than fully embracing the perspectives of young people themselves (Lähdesmäki & Hiltunen, forthcoming). The European Film Academy's annual Young Audience Award exemplifies this balancing act, raising the question of whose taste the awarded European youth films actually reflect (Hiltunen & Lähdesmäki, 2025). Christensen (2023) notes that adult-centred approaches to children's and young people's participation and engagement in media have decreased, but previous



research in the project shows that initiatives, pedagogical practices and policies may still unwittingly be based on such approaches.

Researching young people is crucial for understanding the development of the EFI and the ways in which young people can take their place within it through various professional roles. Moreover, youth is a transformative and defining stage in life, when cultural preferences, identities and social values are shaped. It is a time of creativity, exploration, emotional growth, cognitive development and increasing independence and responsibility, marked by both challenges and opportunities (Flodin et al., 2024, p. 96–97). In today's world, audiovisual culture, including film, is one of the contexts that impact the growth and development of young people as cultural and social individuals and members of various groups and communities. By examining the film preferences, consumption habits, and creative practices of young people, we gain insight into not only the future of the EFI, but also the relationship that young people have with the world.

This report discusses the ways in which young people engage with the EFI and with film in general, based on a broad international survey conducted as part of the REBOOT project. Using this empirical data, the report explores, maps and seeks to understand the ways in which audience habits and creativity can drive competitiveness in the EFI. The report is divided into ten sections. Following the introduction, it describes the data, data collection methods and analysis methods, and reviews scholarly literature related to children and young people and film. This is followed by an empirical analysis of young people's film viewing habits, preferences, creative practices and ideas about diversity and identities in film. The empirical analysis concludes with an examination of young people's preferences within the context of competing film industries. The conclusion summarises key findings and discusses the survey's limitations. Finally, the report proposes policy recommendations based on the analysis.

2 STATE OF THE ART: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S RELATIONSHIP WITH FILM

In this section, we review previous studies that have examined young people's relationship with film. The emphasis is on recent European studies. How young people are represented in cinema and media, and how they use media in their daily lives has been studied significantly more than their film



preferences or their use of cinema. The negative effects of media and questions of media literacy have been a particular object of study – and concern – in the past decades (Hiltunen & Lähdesmäki, 2023, p. 12). Notably, little research has been conducted that directly asks young people for their opinions. As Barker (2022, p. 778, 780) notes, instead, there has been reliance on social constructions that delineate what children are. However, asking young people is crucial if we want to know their actual thoughts. Knowing their preferences is important if we want them to maintain their interest in film, and in European cinema, when an increasing amount of audiovisual entertainment competes for their attention. It is not worth making films for youth if they do not want to see them.

Next, we give a short overview of studies that have focused on young people's film preferences and on their use of cinema in their everyday lives. We will prioritise studies that have explored what young people like rather than studies that suggest how young people should interact with cinema. We review relevant previous studies that provide fruitful points of comparison throughout this report. Prior to the present study, not many cross-cultural studies of young people and cinema have been carried out. Conducting research in a national context has been more common. In Denmark and Belgium research on young people has been active in recent years.

María T. Soto-Sanfiel, Isabel Villegas-Simón and Ariadna Angulo-Brunet conducted one of the few pan-European studies. They explored the relationship of European youth and cinema in a cross-cultural study that involved 937 secondary school students aged 13–19 from eight EU countries: Croatia, England, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Romania and Spain. The researchers explored the students' "general conceptions about cinema", "knowledge on film production and expression" and "conceptions about European cinema" (Soto-Sanfiel et al., 2018a, p. 723). In addition to increasing knowledge about the relationship youth has to cinema the research aimed to "support programmes on film literacy and the promotion of European audiovisual works" and provide information for the audiovisual industry. The results of the study that are relevant for our purposes can be summarised as follows. Young people recognised differences between European and US cinema and preferred the latter. However, they had also watched and liked to watch films produced in Europe. European films were characterised as less exaggerated, less spectacular, less commercial, of less quality and as containing less fantasy than "cinema of other film traditions" (Soto-Sanfiel et al. 2018a, pp. 732–733). European films were also considered more intellectual, artistic and boring than US cinema. According to the study, young people had stereotypical views of European cinema. They also considered films made in their own countries to be of lower quality than



films made elsewhere. There were some national differences, which according to the study should not be ignored when implementing film literacy policies and initiatives (Soto-Sanfiel et al., 2018a, pp. 732–733; 2021, p. 170).

Regarding uses and consumption of cinema Soto-Sanfiel et al. conclude that young people watch films mostly at home (slightly over 80%) and there are no significant differences between countries. They mainly watch films on television, followed by computers. Cinema is the least popular option for watching films. They go to the cinema mainly for entertainment and cognitive motivation is less relevant. European youth prefer dubbing to subtitles. The differences between countries were the greatest in this matter. According to the researchers, many of the differences appear to be “attributable to culture” such as the different cinema-going cultures in the participating countries. This applies also to aspects such as the media on which films are watched, how they choose what to watch and the preferred genres (Soto-Sanfiel et al., 2021, pp. 130–133). Regarding film preferences the three most popular film genres were comedy, action and adventure. Plot, actors and soundtrack were the aspects that best defined the quality of a film (Soto-Sanfiel et al., 2021, p. 129, 134, 135).

As part of their study, a film literacy sub-project which aimed to increase positive attitudes towards European cinema was conducted with students from Croatia, France, Italy, Spain and the UK (Soto-Sanfiel et al., 2018a, 2018b, 2019, 2021). The project revealed that there was no significant change in the students' attitudes before and after the project. General perceptions and preferences about cinema changed the least. The researchers found that such attitudes are difficult to change, regardless of the age of the subjects. Therefore, film education should start at an early age. Although the participants enjoyed the project, they did not think that their idea of European cinema changed during the training. The researchers note that this may be partly because they watched films from only one genre, drama (Soto-Sanfiel et al., 2018b, p. 205–207). They suggest that future studies ask different audiences to define European cinema considering not just the country of origin but also how age determines the definitions (Soto-Sanfiel et al., 2018b, p. 206).

In his study of the Danish film literacy project Med Skolen i Biografen/School Cinema, which involved European arthouse films, Petar Mitric (2022, p. 12–13) reported similar findings regarding attitudes towards European cinema. Only a third of the young participants (from kindergarten to upper secondary school) rated European arthouse films positively, with most finding the films and their stories “boring”, “strange”, “confusing”, “too realistic”, “difficult to follow”, “too much like school” and



simply “not their cup of tea”. However, Mitric (2022, p. 10) notes that according to teachers involved in the film literacy project, many pupils consider school cinema entertaining and “find the shown European arthouse films eye-opening and relatable in the context of different socially and politically engaging themes”. He criticises the project for not including children in curating the programme.

A national survey of 1015 participants on young people's relationship to cinema was carried out in Belgium. Audiences aged 16–18 were the subjects of a study conducted by Aleit Veenstra, Philippe Meers and Daniël Biltereyst in Flanders (Veenstra et al. 2020, p. 245). The researchers were interested in how gender, education and ethnicity inform genre preferences, or “taste cultures”. They found that gender and education influenced genre preferences, but ethnicity had little or no relation to taste in genres. Boys preferred “active” genres such as action and adventure, war and disaster, and Western; girls preferred more “quiescent” genres such as drama, youth & family, musical & music, and romance. People with higher education preferred a wider range of genres (Veenstra et al., 2020, pp. 245–249).

Although many other forms of audiovisual culture, such as social media and games, compete for young people's attention today, Veenstra et al. (2022) note that their interest in cinema as such has not really waned, but interest in European cinema, except for domestic cinema, is still low, while US cinema is more popular. The study highlights the influence of structural and social factors: young people are easily satisfied with the choices made for them by others, such as television channel managers. For example, they watch films shown at a certain time on certain channels and watched by other family members and friends. These choices are driven by habit and tradition, i.e. the popularity of Hollywood films, and for this reason are not very individualised, although in principle, given the large choice, today's consumers could be active and make individual choices. They found out that young audiences who “tend to adapt quickly and with ease to new technologies” are not as mobile as could be expected based on Henry Jenkins' claims about audience mobility, particularly his concept of convergence culture (Veenstra et al., 2020, pp. 240–241; 2022, pp. 770–771). The researchers refer to such behavioural constraints as structured limitations and corporate strategies (Veenstra et al. 2022, p. 767, 770).

A survey of 8- to 17-year-old Danish children and teenagers was conducted as part of the Reaching Young Audiences project. The researchers asked 313 children about their media habits and preferences including favourite films, series, and preferred platforms. According to the findings, Danish youngsters prefer mainstream US content, and their favourite platforms are YouTube, Netflix



and Disney+ (Jensen & Mitric, 2023). Jensen and Mitric note that with age teenagers become more critical of these platforms and the popularity of the platforms decreases (Mitric & Jensen 2023, p. 159). As regards films, US productions dominate: “Of the twelve movie titles occupying the first ten rankings, ten are American productions, while one is a co-production between the US and New Zealand (*The Lord of the Rings*) and one is a British production (*Harry Potter*), which is in first place” (Jensen & Mitric 2023, p. 153). The top ten list did not include any Danish productions. This shows that even in Denmark, where much emphasis is placed on children's content and media literacy initiatives, the situation of domestic productions is not good (Jensen & Mitric, 2023, p. 140; see also Freudendal et al., forthcoming). As they point out, the dominance of US productions is not a surprise. A survey conducted among young Danes in 1996 already produced similar results. The “domestication” of US content has continued among young Danes and the wide availability of US productions on various platforms has ensured that it has become the “standard”, or even “the norm” as the researchers note (Jensen & Mitric, 2023, pp. 153–156).

KIDS Regio's “Keeping up with children as an audience: A pan-European study on children's media consumption” that was carried out in 12 European countries in 2023 and 2024 is a large-scale comparative study of children's film preferences and consumption habits that gives voice to the studied children. 374 children between the ages of 7 and 11 were surveyed. In addition to preferences, the study explored children's viewing habits. The report characterises the age group as in a “dynamic and transformative” period in their lives, which is “marked by significant physical, cognitive, and emotional development” (Flodin et al., 2024, p. 97). This means that the children's film preferences change quickly. The differences between the youngest and oldest of the studied group are vast. While the youngest are still interested in exploring all kinds of audiovisual content, the oldest ones have already “developed clearer preferences” (Flodin et al., 2024, pp. 85, 97–98). The report found that there are more similarities than differences in the preferences and habits of the children across Europe, although some local differences can be found (Flodin et al., 2024, pp. 99–100). The similarities arise from the fact that the children “are born into and grow up in the same global entertainment system”. Most of the content found in that system is American, because the most popular streaming services are Netflix, Amazon Prime, Disney+ and HBO (Flodin et al., 2024, pp. 99–100). However, because of dubbing, children are not always aware of where the content comes from, whether it is local or global. Despite the dominance of US content, children do not seem to dislike other foreign content, which is considered promising from the point of view of the EFI (Flodin et al., 2024, pp. 101–103).



The study suggests that because children grow into the on-demand system, they learn early to become active choosers and to have control over what to consume. The study describes today's children as picky and as “masters in media literacy” (Flodin et al., 2024, pp. 104–106). They make decisions quickly by judging thumbnails, watching trailers, or viewing the first few minutes of a film (Flodin et al., 2024, p. 129). Because of the changed media landscape, children's understanding of film has changed too. Film is something practical for them. It is first about technology and only second about the story. “I watch Netflix’ is an often-used sentence amongst the participating children, when they are asked to describe what they like to watch” (Flodin et al., 2024, p. 127).

Two smaller scale studies were carried out in England and Belgium. Anna Blagrove studied “contemporary young people's cinema-going habitus” in her doctoral thesis, *Teens' Screens: The Places, Values, and Roles of Film Consumption and Cinema-Going for Young Audiences*. The participants were 42 teenagers aged 13–18 from different social classes in the cities of Norwich and Norfolk, England. Blagrove asked how they discuss and define their cinema-going practices as a part of leisure-time activities in general, to what extent they engage with specialised films and arthouse cinemas and what social, cultural and environmental factors limit their use of specialised films (Blagrove, 2020, p. 13). According to Blagrove (2020, p. 226), going to the cinema was considered a special occasion connected to “developing relationships with friends, family members or romantic dates”. Teenagers preferred multiplex and mainstream cinemas and felt “discomfort in the arthouse with peers” (Blagrove, 2020, p. 225). Those from upper classes were more omnivorous in their choice of cinema and film, which means that class still influences attendance at arthouse cinemas to a certain degree.

Leopold De Donnea (2023, p. 17) examined the root causes for the decline in the cinema attendance of young Belgians aged 18 to 24. According to him, the decreasing number of young audiences “is not only a threat for Belgium but for the whole of Europe”, because young people are the biggest revenue generator for cinemas. Two main reasons for the declining young cinema audiences according to the study are Covid-19, which made them realise that watching films at home is comfortable, and the loss of attraction of the cinema experience. De Donnea (2023, pp. 59–61) states: “If cinema is to regain its popularity it has to offer something crazy, social and immersive. Make it more attractive than the sofa at home”. The study offers a valuable insight into the plight of smaller films. Young people are active in social media platforms where only blockbusters are visible and advertised. Therefore, they may not be aware of smaller films, and this decreases the cinema attendance of those young people who have been loyal audiences (De Donnea 2023, pp. 58–62).



This points to the fact that the increased number of communication channels promotes only certain types of films, which receive visibility anyway.

3 METHOD

3.1 Data Collection

In this report, we explore the film preferences, viewing habits and engagement with the film industry of young people, drawing on a survey of 4,453 responses from nine countries: Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain and Türkiye. This sample provides balanced geographic coverage of EU countries, including one EU candidate country. The young people surveyed were between 12 and 24 years old. In most European countries, young people within this age range are in secondary school, followed by tertiary education. In our case, data collection focused on young people enrolled in secondary education and universities, with the goal of obtaining approximately half of the responses from each educational level. Within the secondary education, the aim was to get approximately half of the responses from lower secondary and half of them from upper secondary schools. The hardest group to reach turned out to be the youngest, i.e., pupils in lower secondary school, and the most accessible were university students. In our data, 53.9% of the respondents were studying at university and 45.7% in secondary education, of which 18.3% were in lower secondary education. In addition, the data include responses from 13 12-year-old primary school students from Spain, to ensure an adequate number of respondents from the youngest age group. The average age of the respondents is 18.5 years old. Because our data collection focused on students in upper secondary school and university – excluding, for example, those in lower and higher vocational education – the respondents in our dataset tend to have a higher educational background than average for young people in this age group.

Such an educational focus may have influenced the gender distribution of respondents, the majority of whom are female, in total 63.1% (Table 2). In many countries, female students make up the majority in both upper secondary and university education. The gender imbalance in our data may also be partly explained by empirical observations from some data collectors, who noted that some teenage boys were sometimes less motivated to complete the survey, preferring to spend their time on other activities while their peers responded to it. Of all respondents, 1.5% identified their gender as “other”. The percentage of identification as “other” varied between countries, being the highest in



Finland (4.9%) and lowest in France (0.0%). Moreover, 2.2% of the respondents did not want to disclose their gender. The gender question was slightly modified in the Turkish questionnaire, which did not include the option of “other” for minors, as the national authorities prohibited its inclusion because it was considered to promote gender and sexual minority identities.

The survey data consists of responses to 23 questions (see Appendix 1), including 19 multiple-choice and three open-ended questions, and a question in which the respondents were asked to rate the response options on a Likert scale. The questionnaire was divided into five thematic sections: film preferences, geographical preferences, linguistic and cultural preferences, viewing habits and demographic background questions.

The data collection focused on urban centres within the nine partner countries (Table 1).¹ As these countries differ significantly in population size and the density of urban areas, the character of the selected urban centres also varies, reflecting the diversity of urbanity in the EU and EU candidate countries. However, within their national contexts, these urban areas represent either large or medium-sized cities that host key urban facilities, such as institutions of higher education. The largest urban centre included in the data collection was Istanbul in Türkiye, with 15.7 million residents living in its metropolitan area. The smallest urban centre was Jyväskylä in Finland, with around 149,000 residents living in the city and its surrounding region. Besides the city centres, the data was collected in sub-regions of these urban centres. Some of these sub-regions, such as those close to Nice and Cannes in France, can rather be described as rural than urban.

The data collection aimed to get complete classes or study groups of young people in the selected urban centres to respond to the survey. Moreover, the aim was to select the secondary schools and their classes or study groups to represent the diversity of the population in the urban centres. Most of the data was collected in the partners' headquarters, but in four cases (see Table 1), responses were also collected or collected only at secondary schools located in other cities. This was either because the schools had received a large amount of other research requests and were not willing

¹ The following scholars were involved in the data collection: Angeliki Chatziefrimidou, Simon Haslauer, Raphaela Stibor and Lisa Baumgartner in Austria; Engelart Willems, Jens Van Landschoot and Daniël Biltreyst in Belgium; Kaisa Hiltunen and Tuuli Lähdesmäki in Finland; Charline Callet in France; Eirini Sifaki, Stella-Maria Ntavia, Katerina Grammatikopoulou and Dimitra Thliverou in Greece; Caterina Sganga, Arianna Martinelli, Pelin Turan, Piergiorgio Pilo and Denise Amram in Italy; Alicja Waszkiewicz-Raviv and Anita Zawisza in Poland; Fernando Ramos, Laura Caballero and Samia Benaissa in Spain; Elif Akçali, Melis Behlil and Ruken Doğu Erdede in Türkiye.



to participate or there were difficulties in communicating with the schools or getting parental consent for minors. At universities, attempts were made to receive answers from many different faculties to ensure the diversity of respondents.

Table 1: Urban centres included in the data collection.

Countries	Urban centers and regional data collection locations
Austria	Vienna , 2,028,290 inhabitants (Bauer, Fendt & Trautinger, 2025)
Belgium	Ghent , 272,657 inhabitants (Statbel – Belgium in Figures, 2025); Eeklo , 22,733 inhabitants (Statbel – Belgium in Figures, 2025)
Finland	Jyväskylä , 149,194 inhabitants (Statistics Finland, 2024)
France	Nice , 353,701 inhabitants (INSEE, 2024a); Cannes , 74,040 inhabitants (INSEE, 2024b); Vinon-sur-Verdon , 4,387 inhabitants (INSEE, 2024c); Saint-Maximin-la-Sainte-Baume , 17,691 inhabitants (INSEE, 2024d)
Greece	Athens , 643,452 inhabitants; Volos , 139,670 inhabitants (Hellenic Statistical Authority, 2023)
Italy	Pisa , 89,450 inhabitants (Istat, 2024)
Poland	Warsaw , 1,864,035 inhabitants (Statistical Office in Warszawa, 2025)
Spain	Madrid , 3,422,416 inhabitants (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2024)
Türkiye	Istanbul , 15,701,602 inhabitants; Izmir , 4,493,242 inhabitants (Tuikinfo, 2025)

Prior to data collection, ethical clearance and the necessary permits for conducting research in schools and universities were obtained. Practices regarding ethical clearance and research authorisations varied from country to country. In some countries it took a month to obtain a permit, while in others the process required contacting several agencies and took considerably longer. After this, the researchers contacted secondary schools with different kinds of status and demographic profiles in the selected urban centres and asked for permission to conduct the survey in their classrooms. Each research team negotiated with the schools to find the best way to inform the



parents and students about the survey, to ask for the consent of the minors' parents and to implement the survey.

When collecting the data, the researchers visited the classrooms, introduced the research project and the survey to the students, and took care that the students were able to respond to it. It was emphasised that participation was voluntary to all respondents. Following the ethical guidelines, researchers explained in child-friendly language the study's objectives and process, and emphasised children's and young people's right to withdraw from the study at any time without facing any consequences. Additionally, researchers sought to minimise possible power imbalances, such as adult and child or researcher and child, by approaching participants respectfully and at eye level. As a token of appreciation, researchers in many countries offered participants a small thank you gift, such as candies, cinema ticket vouchers or similar items. As the aim was to cause as little disruption as possible to school work, the researchers took care of administering the survey whenever possible. In some schools, teachers preferred to take care of the process. In some countries, schools were reluctant to host the survey, so data collection was also carried out by approaching young people at events specifically targeted at them. These included, for example, the Media Knowledge Olympiad for high school students at the University of Warsaw and the Researchers' Bright Night at the Sant'Anna School of Advanced Studies in Pisa. Additionally, in cases where partners faced difficulties collecting data in schools, young people were reached through leisure-time groups, such as the Scout association in Pisa, or by sharing the online survey link with colleagues who are parents of minors within the study's target age range, as was done at the University of Warsaw. In several urban centres, the researchers sought to reach young people by spreading flyers and posters including a QR code to the survey.

The survey was primarily conducted online, though in some countries, minors responded via paper questionnaire. The most suitable method was determined using ethical recommendations specific to each school or university. At universities, data collection occurred in the same manner as in secondary schools: by visiting study groups or lectures and asking students to complete the questionnaire. Additionally, at universities, responses were commonly collected by distributing the survey link via students' email lists and social media platforms, such as WhatsApp. Partners used various survey tools approved by their respective universities. The questionnaire itself was identical in each country, albeit in different languages. Small prizes, such as a raffle for cinema tickets, were used as incentives to respond.



In addition to those mentioned above, other challenges were faced in the data collection phase. Some schools found it difficult to find a suitable time to carry out the survey because of their tight work schedules. Soto-Sanfiel et al. (2018, p. 716) reported similar challenges: “When studying young people in school contexts, research must fit in with formal teaching, which means altering curricular activities, with the consequent pedagogical or ethical dilemmas.” In our study, some French school representatives expressed discomfort with the substance of the survey and declined to participate. In Türkiye, the nature of some of the questions made it impossible to conduct the survey in classrooms. Besides gender, as discussed earlier, the question about preferred streaming services or video-on-demand platforms was considered problematic by the Turkish authorities.

The original goal was to receive 4,500 responses (500 from each country), which was nearly achieved. The survey data was collected in different countries for more than a year. The data collection began in spring 2024 and ended in spring 2025. After data collection, the national datasets were combined, and the project's task and work package leaders' teams checked their validity. During the validity check, some responses were discarded for high level of incompleteness or due to missing background information (e.g., age and study level) to ensure the age validity of the respondents. Still, responses that did not answer all questions were included, so as not to miss out on important information on specific topics.

The size of the national datasets varies from 392 to 571 (Table 2). The survey did not ask direct questions about respondents' citizenship or their ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious backgrounds. During the planning phase of the survey, there was significant disagreement as to whether such questions are problematic, as they could highlight differences between young people in an undesirable manner during the data collection process. Additionally, some universities have policies that do not permit questions about ethnicity. However, the survey did ask in which country the respondents reside. In response to this question, 118 young people indicated a country other than the one in which the data was collected. This may suggest that these respondents have various personal and cultural connections to another country, due to, for instance, having family or relatives living there, and thus spend significant amounts of time there. These responses may also reflect a migrant or refugee background. Despite the limitation of the survey in that respect, we consider this a reflection of cultural diversity among the respondents. Respondents from France most frequently named in this question another country (in total 62), while in Austria and Greece such responses were the least common (in total 3 in both). Compounding 36 additional countries were mentioned in this question – most frequently China and Morocco (both 7 times).



Table 2: Description of the data and its core demographic factors.

Country	N	% of all data	Age mean	In secondary education %	In university education %	Female / Male / Other %**
Austria	512	11.5	18.3	48.0	52.0	65.7 / 31.4 / 0.2
Belgium	496	11.1	16.9	49.9	50.1	57.3 / 40.6 / 0.8
Finland	571	12.8	18.5	40.8	59.2	64.6 / 28.7 / 4.9
France	399	9.0	18.3	27.6	72.4	65.1 / 32.4 / 0.0
Greece	508	11.4	17.6	51.0	49.0	62.1 / 32.9 / 2.0
Italy	562	12.6	20.6	100.0*	0.0*	56.3 / 40.1 / 1.4
Poland	525	11.8	17.8	53.7	46.3	59.5 / 37.2 / 0.6
Spain	488	11.0	18.3	46.2	53.8	74.6 / 22.3 / 1.4
Türkiye	392	8.8	19.2	28.8	71.2	63.0 / 33.9 / 1.1
Total	4,453	100	18.5	45.7	53.9	63.1 / 33.2 / 1.5

*Italian dataset included only 86 responses to the question on education level.

**Besides these options, the respondents could choose “I don’t want to say”, but these responses are not included in this table.

3.2 Data Analysis

The data were analysed using statistical, quantitative and qualitative methods. The main method was statistical analysis conducted using Excel and SPSS to provide descriptive statistics, such as the frequency, mean and/or percentage of responses for each survey question. Additionally, responses were examined in relation to demographic factors, such as age, gender and level of study as well as other variables that were hypothetically deemed to impact the film viewing habits, preferences and creative practices of young people. These variables include film education received and frequency of film watching. Survey responses to each question were also cross-analysed across national datasets. The report discusses and interprets the key observations of the tables, i.e., the biggest differences in the numbers. The tables were created to provide statistical information to various target audiences. Due to the diversity of the survey questions and the information they provide, the tables do not follow a unified format.



To further analyse the data, quantitative methods were used to explore the statistical significance of key observations. This analysis was conducted using SPSS and included crosstabulation and chi-square tests. The categorical variables considered most relevant for analysing the survey questions were used. To identify significant variables at least at the 5% level, analyses of standardised residuals (SR) were conducted.

The survey included a few open-ended questions, as well as an “other” option for closed questions (see Appendix 1). The written responses were analysed by identifying the most frequent responses and/or the most common themes through qualitative content analysis. The most frequent responses and themes are briefly discussed in the report.

4 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S FILM VIEWING HABITS

This section analyses the frequency of children and young people's film consumption: where they watch films, with whom, with what technology, and what influences their film choices. In this regard, this study explored in detail how young people typically watch films. The results of the study highlight that approximately a quarter of the participants (25.1%) reported watching films often and mainly in cinemas, while the majority preferred watching films on VoD on television (61.1%) or on a computer (54.9%). Less popular among the participants is watching films on VoD via phones (28.9%), on television channels (22.6%) or on VoD via tablets (22.1%). Table 3 presents the results from all participants across the nine countries about how they usually watch films.

Table 3: Young Europeans' film watching preferences.

	never	rarely	sometimes	often	mainly
cinema	2.1	30.6	41.5	17.7	7.4
television channels	18.1	34.9	23.3	13.4	9.2



video on demand on television	10.0	10.9	15.5	21.1	40.0
video on demand on computer	13.2	13.9	15.4	19.3	35.6
video on demand on tablet	51.4	14.3	10.0	9.2	12.9
video on demand on phone	29.7	22.2	17.0	12.5	16.4

Exploring the differences between the nine countries, the study examined whether the separate countries converge or diverge from the total European responses. Starting from watching films in cinemas, the nine countries do not present any significant differences. However, compared to the total sample of the study, participants from Finland have lower participation and in contrast, participants from Spain have the highest participation.

In regard to watching films mainly from television channels, although the discrepancy among the nine countries is not substantial, participants from Belgium and Finland watch films on television channels more frequently than those from the other countries, while participants from Türkiye watch fewer films on television channels compared to the rest of the countries in the study.

When it comes to watching films primarily via VoD on television, Spain stands out as significantly higher than the other countries, while participants from Poland watch films on VoD on television less frequently than those from other countries. Similarly, participants from Spain watch films on VoD on tablets more often compared to the other countries. In contrast, significantly fewer participants in Finland and France use tablets to watch films on VoD. Watching films on VoD on the computer in Türkiye is more frequent compared to the other countries. Finally, there are no notable differences between countries in terms of watching movies mainly via VoD on phones. The detailed information is presented in Table 4.



Table 4: Typical film watching preferences of young Europeans across countries.

		Total	AU	BE	FI	FR	GR	IT	PO	SP	TÜ
cinema	mean	2.98	2.98	2.91	2.74	3.00	2.98	3.08	3.08	3.12	2.91
	sd	0.93	0.98	0.90	0.83	0.87	0.98	0.90	0.90	0.95	1.03
television channels	mean	2.60	2.77	2.84	2.83	2.74	2.75	2.32	2.36	2.42	2.29
	sd	1.20	1.40	1.19	1.21	1.08	1.20	1.05	1.07	1.15	1.18
video on demand on television	mean	3.72	3.61	3.87	3.69	3.63	3.45	3.77	3.35	4.45	3.65
	sd	1.37	1.46	1.25	1.33	1.29	1.53	1.24	1.51	0.94	1.33
video on demand on computer	mean	3.52	3.41	3.47	3.33	3.53	3.45	3.49	3.40	3.51	4.30
	sd	1.44	1.45	1.44	1.42	1.47	1.47	1.43	1.44	1.46	1.13
video on demand on tablet	mean	2.16	2.37	2.10	1.66	1.91	2.05	2.25	2.15	2.50	2.58
	sd	1.47	1.56	1.40	1.14	1.32	1.48	1.50	1.47	1.56	1.61
video on demand on phone	mean	2.63	2.72	2.53	2.66	2.54	2.98	2.30	2.83	2.37	2.74
	sd	1.45	1.48	1.39	1.43	1.42	1.58	1.36	1.42	1.37	1.50

Regarding gender, the only notable difference is that women and girls watch films on VoD using tablets more frequently than men and boys. Moreover, comparing school and university students, both age groups present similar preferences, except that watching films mainly from television channels and from VoD on phone is more common among the school than the university group. In contrast, more university students prefer watching films on VoD on the computer than secondary school students. More details are presented in Table 5.



Table 5: Typical film watching preferences of young Europeans in terms of study level, age and gender.

		school	university	female	male	other
cinema	mean	2.85	3.06	2.98	2.99	2.98
	sd	0.90	0.94	0.89	1.00	0.89
television channels	mean	2.89	2.42	2.61	2.59	2.37
	sd	1.28	1.10	1.18	1.23	1.36
video on demand/streaming service on television	mean	3.85	3.61	3.78	3.63	3.42
	sd	1.36	1.38	1.35	1.38	1.48
video on demand on computer	mean	3.11	3.83	3.59	3.39	3.58
	sd	1.50	1.32	1.43	1.46	1.43
video on demand on tablet	mean	2.30	2.02	2.30	1.90	1.97
	sd	1.48	1.44	1.53	1.32	1.47
video on demand on phone	mean	2.89	2.48	2.69	2.50	2.63
	sd	1.48	1.41	1.45	1.43	1.56

The findings highlight that young people prefer watching films via VoD on television or a computer, while traditional television channels and cinema are less popular options. These findings echo Soto-Sanfiel et al. (2021), confirming young people's preference to watch films at home over visiting the cinema. However, the preference towards cinema in the current study is higher than reported by Soto-Sanfiel et al. (2021), which could possibly be explained by the impact of Covid-19, as their 2021 study was conducted during the pandemic. The results also align with Flodin et al. (2024), pointing that digital technologies have expanded and shifted the ways in which movies are watched.



Additionally, this study examined the frequency with which young people watch films. Most participants watch films a few times a month (40.4%) or every week (37.2%), while nearly one tenth of the participants watch films either daily (8.7%) or a few times a year (10.8%).

To explore the differences in the national data, starting from the daily film consumption, France had significantly higher (18.5%) and Finland significantly lower consumption (1.8%) than the other countries. Regarding weekly consumption the higher proportions are in Spain (43.3%), in Italy (42.3%) and in France (41.1%), while the lowest in Finland (26.8%). Respondents are more likely to watch films a few times a month in Finland (49.7%) and less often in France (31.8%). Respondents are more likely to watch films a few times per year mainly in Finland (18.2%) compared to the lowest proportions in France (5.3%) and Belgium (5.4%). Finally, only in Belgium, 7.7% of the participants stated that they never watch a film, which is statistically higher than the other countries. More details are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Frequency of film consumption.

	Total	AU	BE	FI	FR	GR	IT	PO	SP	TÜ
every day	8.7	12.4	4.4	1.8	18.5	5.7	11.9	11.6	5.8	8.4
every week	37.2	37.0	39.6	26.8	41.1	38.3	42.3	32.8	43.3	35.7
a few times a month	40.4	36.8	41.9	49.7	31.8	43.1	38.0	39.2	38.7	41.5
a few times a year	10.8	12.4	5.4	18.2	5.3	10.3	6.5	16.0	10.6	10.3
more rarely	1.8	1.2	1.0	3.2	3.3	2.2	0.4	0.4	1.4	3.6
never	1.2	0.2	7.7	0.4	0.0	0.4	1.0	0.0	0.2	0.6

The findings show that most young Europeans watch films on a monthly or weekly basis (77.65%), while only a few watch films daily or annually. These findings contrast with Flodin et al. (2024), who



reported that young people watch short video formats more frequently than longer versions, such as films.

Moreover, the study examined with whom young Europeans prefer to watch films.² Over half of the participants (55.1%) reported watching films alone, while around one-third watched with their family (36.6%) or their friends (32.6%). Watching with a partner was least common (22.1%).

Exploring cross-country differences, watching films with friends is most common in Greece (54.4%) and least frequent in Poland (14.3%), while Spain (62.7%) has the highest proportion of young people watching films with family members and Türkiye has the lowest (8.7%). Watching films with a partner is least common in Türkiye (11.7%). Finally, Spain (69.7%) has the highest proportion of participants who prefer watching films alone, compared to Finland (35.4%), which has the lowest proportion.

Table 7: With whom young Europeans prefer watching films.

	Total	AU	BE	FI	FR	GR	IT	PO	SP	TÜ
friends	32.6	49.2	39.5	16.1	39.8	54.5	16.4	14.3	45.5	22.4
family	36.6	47.1	58.5	21.0	55.1	44.9	14.4	21.3	62.7	8.7
boyfriend/girlfriend /partner	22.1	27.1	26.2	28.0	23.3	23.2	18.1	16.0	23.4	11.7
alone	55.1	68.4	59.3	35.4	67.7	67.1	42.0	47.4	69.7	48.2

Regarding gender, no major differences are noticed, except that female respondents (26.2%) watch films with their partners more frequently than male ones (17.2%). Significant differences are found between study levels: school students (52.4%) are more likely to watch films with their family than

² The participating universities chose two ways to answer the question “With whom do young Europeans prefer watching films?”: This was a single-option question in Türkiye, Italy, Finland and Poland; and a multi-option question in Austria, Greece, Spain, Belgium and France. Therefore, the percentages total over 100%. This applies to the interpretation of the data as well, as the countries with the multi-option question present higher percentages than the countries with the single-option question.



university students (22.1%), while university students (32.7%) are more likely to watch films with their partners than school students (11.2%).

School students reported watching films with family more than university students ($\chi^2(1, N = 2,348) = 134.188, p < .001$, SR 5.8 school students and -5.4 university students). University students reported watching films with their partner more than school students ($\chi^2(1, N = 2,350) = 184.123, p < .001$, SR -8.6 school students and 8.0 university students) and alone ($\chi^2(1, N = 2,350) = 14.211, p < .001$, SR -1.6 school students and 1.5 university students). This result is expected as school students are more likely to be living with their families and university students are more likely to have a partner.

As the findings present, young Europeans prefer watching films alone, followed by watching with family or friends. Age differences emerge, as school students more often watch with family, while university students more often watch with partners. These findings differ from those of Parry (2024), who reported that children watch films mainly at home with family, which could be explained by the age range between the studies, as Parry (2024) examined children aged seven to 11, highlighting that film viewing habits develop and change with age. Nevertheless, both studies indicate that school students frequently watch films with their families, as confirmed by Flodin et al. (2024).

The study next examined how young Europeans decide which films to watch. The majority rely on recommendations either from friends or family (63.9%) or from social media platforms (58.8%). Another popular option among young Europeans is selecting a film based on the trailer (53.9%). Less common factors are film reviews (32.8%), film posters (18.2%) and television commercials (12.8%).

Exploring the differences between the countries, selecting to watch a film based on friends' or family's recommendation is most popular in Spain (78.6%) and least common in Türkiye (51.8%). Social media recommendations are most frequent in Austria and Poland (63.2%) and least in Italy (48.3%). Selecting a film through a film review is most popular in Türkiye (44.3%) and least popular in Belgium (21.2%). Conversely, trailers are very popular in Belgium, while this option is less popular in Türkiye (36.4%). Movie selection through commercials on television is most frequent in Belgium (19.5%) and least in Türkiye (4.5%). Finally, 23.8% of the participants in Türkiye do not choose a film based on any particular information, which is the highest proportion in the participant countries. More details can be found in Table 8.



Table 8: How young Europeans choose to watch a film.

	recommendati on from a friend or family	recommen dation in social media	film review	film poster	trailer	commerci als on television	I don't choose a film based on any particular information
Total	63.9	58.8	32.8	18.2	53.9	12.8	11.7
AU	65.7	63.2	25.6	12.4	52.6	8.1	8.5
BE	62.3	55.3	21.2	17.2	67.9	19.5	6.3
FI	63.4	59.4	31.7	11.7	46.9	15.1	15.2
FR	69.9	60.3	29.1	31.6	66.4	19.0	6.5
GR	61.9	62.9	32.7	18.2	58.5	14.0	11.2
IT	56.4	48.3	39.9	17.6	45.6	11.0	13.7
PO	63.2	63.2	37.0	16.4	58.5	11.0	14.1
SP	78.6	60.4	35.5	23.9	51.8	12.4	7.6
TÜ	51.8	55.2	44.3	19.3	36.4	4.5	23.8

The survey asked about the ways in which young Europeans select films for viewing. Both age groups rely mostly on recommendations from their close environment, such as friends and family, and from social media or trailers. However, there are differences in each option. University students are more likely than school students to select a film based on recommendation from a friend or family or social media, film reviews and posters. In contrast, school students more often rely on trailers, commercials on television or they do not choose a film based on any particular information.



Table 9: The methods by which young Europeans select films for viewing by study levels.

	recommen dation from a friend or family	recomm endatio n in social media	film review	film poster	trailer	commerci als on television	I don't choose a film based on any particular information
school	58.0	55.6	22.4	15.8	55.6	14.0	14.7
university	69.7	63.8	40.5	20.3	54.7	12.2	9.2

Similarly interesting are the differences based on gender. Even though recommendations from their close environment or social media and trailers are the most popular options for both male and female respondents, there are gender differences in what is more popular for each method. Female are more likely than male respondents to choose films based on recommendations from friends or family, trailers, social media or posters. Male are more likely than female respondents to rely on film reviews or report not using any specific source when choosing films. No significant differences are found between genders when choosing films based on television advertising, as presented in Table 10 in more detail.

Table 10: The methods by which young Europeans select films for viewing by gender.

	recomme ndation from a friend or family	recom menda tion in social media	film review	film poster	trailer	commerci als on television	I don't choose a film based on any particular information
female	67.7	64.7	31.5	19.2	57.5	13.0	9.7
male	57.6	49.0	35.6	15.8	47.9	12.7	14.9
other	54.8	53.2	38.7	21.0	51.6	8.1	16.1



The findings indicate that young Europeans of both age levels choose to watch a film mostly based on recommendations by friends, family and social media, while trailers are also a popular option. Among the least popular options were film reviews, film posters and television commercials. The results differ from Soto-Sanfiel et al. (2021, p. 128) who reported that young people most often selected films to watch based on TV commercials (35.6%), the internet (22.1%), others (21.2%), recommendations from friends (16.4%) and posters (4.7%). In contrast, the present study shows television commercials to be a less common influence, while recommendations from friends appear more important.

Moreover, the study explored how satisfied are young people in Europe, regarding the variety of films offered in local cinemas, television channels and streaming services (Table 11). Young people in Europe expressed their satisfaction in regard to film variety screening in local cinemas (48.5%) and mainly in streaming services (72.6%). However, they expressed dissatisfaction with the variety in television channels, with 26.4% being satisfied.

Table 11: Young Europeans' contentment with the diversity of films in local cinema, TV and streaming.

Total	in local cinemas	in television channels	in streaming services
not satisfied	16.2	31.7	10.4
not dissatisfied or satisfied	28.1	29.9	11.9
satisfied	48.5	26.4	72.6
I don't know	7.3	12.0	5.1

Focusing on the participating countries in more detail, examining the topic of satisfaction with the film variety in local cinemas, Belgium is significantly more satisfied than the other participating countries, reaching up to 69.4%. On the contrary, the lowest proportion is found in Türkiye, where only 34.2% of young people were pleased with the variety of films. Additionally, regarding young people's satisfaction with the film variety on streaming services, in Spain the highest proportion of young people (85.4%) is pleased with the provided film variety and the lowest proportion is found in



Türkiye with 42.5%. Finally, regarding the film variety on television channels, even though it has low proportion compared to the other categories, Belgium has significantly high proportion with 45.4% of participants stating that they were satisfied. In contrast, Italy is the least satisfied compared to other countries (16.6%).

Taking age into account, both study level groups expressed similar views: around a quarter of young people were satisfied with the variety of films offered by television channels, almost half with local cinemas and almost three-quarters with the variety of films offered by streaming services. However, school students are more satisfied than university students with the variety offered by television (school students 31.2% and university students 24.3%) and streaming services (school students 75.7% and university students 70.0%). Regarding gender, there are no major differences between them, except female respondents are slightly more satisfied with the films on offer on streaming services (female 74.8% and male 69.7%). More information is presented in Table 12.

Table 12: Young Europeans' contentment with the diversity of films in local cinema, TV and streaming by study level and gender.

		school	university	female	male	other
in local cinemas	not satisfied	14.5	17.8	16.1	15.7	15.6
	not dissatisfied or satisfied	28.1	28.0	29.4	25.3	35.9
	satisfied	47.9	48.6	48.2	50.7	45.3
	I don't know	9.5	5.6	6.3	8.3	3.1
in television channels	not satisfied	26.8	33.0	30.9	32.4	37.5
	not dissatisfied or satisfied	31.2	30.2	31.6	27.8	15.6
	satisfied	31.2	24.3	26.3	27.0	26.6



	I don't know	10.8	12.6	11.2	12.8	20.3
in streaming services	not satisfied	8.1	12.8	9.9	11.4	11.1
	not dissatisfied or satisfied	8.7	14.3	11.3	12.7	11.1
	satisfied	75.7	70.0	74.8	69.7	72.2
	I don't know	7.6	2.9	4.0	6.3	5.6

The findings of the study indicate that about a quarter of young people (26.4%) are satisfied with the variety of films available on television channels, nearly half (48.5%) are satisfied with the selection in cinemas and a clear majority (72.6%) report satisfaction with the variety offered by streaming services. Looking at the study levels, school students are more satisfied than university students with the variety of films offered by streaming services and television channels. The results differ from Veenstra et al. (2022) who reported that young people are easily satisfied with the choices made for them by others, such as television channel managers, as the present study found that young people are not pleased with the film variety of television channels. Finally, Parry (2024) pointed out that the fact that young people have access to streaming services and therefore to a variety of films has developed their abilities to make very nuanced choices about what they like and dislike, which aligns with the findings of the present study.

Another aspect examined in this study was how often young people in Europe visit cinemas. Overall, 71.3% reported watching a film in the cinema either every few months or once a year. More specifically, 3.9% stated they never go to the cinema, 4.7% attend weekly and 20.1% go monthly. The largest groups reported visiting every few months (40.5%) or yearly (30.8%).

A closer look at individual countries reveals notable differences in cinema attendance (Table 13). Weekly visits are least common in Finland (0.4%) and Belgium (2.8%), while they are considerably higher in Italy (9.6%) and Türkiye (12.3%). Finland stands out with the lowest proportion of monthly visits (8.4%) but the highest proportion of yearly visits (50.3%). By contrast, Poland records the



lowest share of yearly visits (11.5%) and the highest share of visits every few months (54.6%). Finally, France has the largest proportion of young people who never attend the cinema (7.5%).

Table 13: How often young Europeans visit the cinema.

	weekly	monthly	every couple of months	yearly	never
Total	4.7	20.1	40.5	30.8	3.9
AU	4.7	18.9	51.7	22.7	2.0
BE	1.5	18.0	45.1	30.7	4.8
FI	0.4	8.4	35.6	50.3	5.4
FR	2.8	29.3	33.6	26.8	7.5
GR	2.6	22.0	30.9	40.2	4.4
IT	9.6	26.2	37.4	22.9	3.9
PO	5.9	24.9	54.6	11.5	3.1
SP	4.8	22.2	35.8	36.0	1.2
TÜ	12.3	11.7	38.2	34.8	3.1

When examining cinema attendance by study level and gender, no major differences are apparent. However, school students (1.5%) attend the cinema weekly less often than university students (6.3%), while they are slightly more likely to never go to the cinema (5.2% vs 2.9%). A minor gender difference is also noted: male respondents (6.4%) visit the cinema weekly more often than female ones (3.7%). Further details are provided in Table 14.



Table 14: How often young Europeans visit the cinema by gender and study level.

	weekly	monthly	every couple of months	yearly	never
school	1.5	16.3	42.3	34.7	5.2
university	6.3	22.1	39.4	29.4	2.9
female	3.7	18.9	42.4	31.9	3.1
male	6.4	22.5	38.1	28.2	4.7
other	6.3	18.8	29.1	31.3	4.7

The study found that most young Europeans visit cinemas every few months or once a year, with 71.3% reporting this frequency. Only a small proportion attend weekly (4.7%) or never go (3.9%). Study level and gender show minor differences: university students attend weekly more often than school students, while school students are slightly more likely to never visit the cinema. Male respondents also visit weekly slightly more than female respondents. The results are consistent with the findings of De Donnea (2023), who noted a decline in cinema attendance among young people in Belgium. De Donnea attributed this to the Covid-19 pandemic, which closed cinemas and highlighted the convenience of watching movies at home. Furthermore, their study noted that streaming platforms are more accessible and often cheaper than traditional cinemas (De Donnea, 2023).

To summarise the results on their film viewing habits, children and young people prefer watching films mainly via VoD on television, followed by VoD on computer. Young Europeans visit the cinema sometimes, while they rarely watch films on television channels and VoD on a tablet or phone (Table 15).



Table 15: Film watching preferences among young Europeans by media channels.

	never	rarely	sometimes	often	mainly
cinema	2.1	30.6	41.5	17.7	7.4
television channels	18.1	34.9	23.3	13.4	9.2
video on demand on television	10.0	10.9	15.5	21.1	40.0
video on demand on computer	13.2	13.9	15.4	19.3	35.6
video on demand on tablet	51.4	14.3	10.0	9.2	12.9
video on demand on phone	29.7	22.2	17.0	12.5	16.4

This section presented the results of the study on young Europeans' viewing habits. Young people expressed their preferences in watching films via VoD on television or a computer over television channels and in the cinema. However, cinema plays an important role among young European audiences as the study found that the majority of young Europeans visit cinemas every few months or annually. Regarding film watching frequency, most participants watch films a few times per week or per month, which underlines the importance of films among young Europeans. The findings showed that most participants prefer watching films alone, followed by watching films with friends and family. Additionally, young Europeans' film choices are mostly influenced by their social environment, including first their friends and family and second, social media and trailers. Finally, young Europeans express their preference for the wider variety of films offered by streaming services than on television channels.



5 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S FILM PREFERENCES

This section addresses children and young people as an audience by examining their film preferences. In addition to exploring the films they have watched recently, their favourite films and genres, the section more broadly addresses what young people consider to be important aspects of films. The section analyses these preferences in relation to the following background information about the children and young people surveyed: age, gender, received film education and film watching frequency.

Today's young people have access to an unprecedented range of films through a variety of streaming services. While US productions dominate most of these platforms, films from most continents are also available, although they can take some effort to find. Earlier research has clearly shown that young Europeans prefer American films. This was concluded by Soto-Sanfiel et al. (2018a, 2021) in a comparative study conducted in eight European countries and by Jensen and Mitric in the Danish study of 8- to 17-year-olds.

5.1 Recently Watched Films

Respondents were asked about the film they watched last. There was a wide variation in responses, which is reflected in the fact that no particular film received very many mentions. Most films received only one mention. Recent films produced in the last two years were mentioned the most often. However, older films, such as *The Notebook* (2004) and *Interstellar* (2014), were mentioned often, which indicates that these films are still popular and easily available for viewing.

The US film *Dune 2* received the most mentions (64) with Harry Potter films (53) second on the top 15 list of combined responses from all the countries. The list includes 18 US films and eight non-American films, six of which are European. Four of the European films are in the top ten. These are *Harry Potter*, *The Substance*, *Poor Things* and *Beating Hearts*. The US is a co-producer in *Harry Potter* and *Poor Things*. In addition to the *Harry Potters*, several other films belonging to popular film series are included in the top 15 list. It is not possible to say exactly how many times films belonging to a series of three or more (or even two) films were mentioned because, in many cases, the responses did not specify which film was being referred to. In the case of Harry Potter films, for example, almost a third of the responses mentioned only Harry Potter. Other such unclear cases in the top 15 are *Dune*, *Inside Out*, *Moana*, *Smile*, *The Hunger Games*, *The Lord of the Rings*, *Terrifier*



and *The Maze Runner*. Although films aimed at teenage audiences dominate the list, it includes films for more mature audiences such as *Substance* and *Oppenheimer*.

Table 16: Top 15 last seen films in all countries. European films in bold.

TOP 15: The last seen films		
Ranking	Title	Number of mentions
1.	<i>Dune 2</i> (US, 2024)	64
2.	<i>Harry Potter</i> (UK & US, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011)	53
3.	<i>A Minecraft Movie</i> (US, Sweden, UK, Canada, 2025) <i>Oppenheimer</i> (US, 2023)	34
4.	<i>Inside Out 2</i> (US, 2024) <i>The Substance</i> (UK, France, 2024)	30
5.	<i>Challengers</i> (US, Italy, 2024)	28
6.	<i>Green Book</i> (US, China, 2018)* <i>Poor Things</i> (Ireland, UK, US, Hungary, 2023) <i>Interstellar</i> (US, 2014) <i>Moana/Vaiana 2</i> (US, 2024)	27
7.	<i>Smile 2</i> (US, 2024)	26
8.	<i>The Hunger Games</i> (US, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2023)	25
9.	<i>Anyone but You</i> (US, Australia, 2023)	24
10.	<i>The Lord of the Rings</i> (New Zealand, US, 2001, 2002, 2003) <i>Beating Hearts</i> (France, Belgium, 2024)	22
11.	<i>Deadpool and Wolverine</i> (US, 2024) <i>Nosferatu</i> (US, 2024) <i>Venom: The Last Dance</i> (US, 2024)	21
12.	<i>Terrifier 3</i> (US, 2024) <i>Joker: Folie à Deux</i> (US, Canada, 2024) <i>Red One</i> (US, 2024)	20
13.	<i>The Maze Runner</i> (US, 2014, 2015, 2018) <i>It Ends with Us</i> (US, 2024) <i>Shrek</i> (US, 2001, 2004, 2007, 2010)	19



TOP 15: The last seen films		
14.	<i>The Notebook</i> (US, 2004) <i>Wicked</i> (US, Japan, Canada, Iceland, UK, 2024) <i>Society of the Snow</i> (Spain, 2023)	18
15.	<i>Stormskerry Maja</i> (Finland 2024)**	17

*only in Spain, **only in Finland

Country-specific top ten lists were also compiled. These national lists show some differences between countries. France and Italy, which have among Europe's five biggest film industries, had the most domestic productions in their top ten lists. The French list includes the most, seven, European films, and five of those are French. The Italian top ten also includes seven European films, and five of those are Italian. Finland has four European films out of which three are domestic. Spain and Türkiye both have one domestic film on their lists, with Turkish film in the first position in Türkiye. Austria has three European productions and Poland two, but no domestic films in their respective top ten lists. Greece has one European film on the top ten list of last watched films. Of the five biggest European film industries involved in this study Spain had the fewest domestic (1) and European films (3) in the top ten list. (For a market overview of Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Poland, and Spain see Vlassis et al., forthcoming, and about the socioeconomic status of the film industry in Europe, see Martinelli et al. forthcoming).

The domestic films that made it to the national lists of the most last watched films were recently released films such as *Beating Hearts* (*L'amour ouf*, 2024) and *The Count of Monte Cristo* (2024) in the case of France, *Diamanti* (2024), *Parthenope* (2024) and *Follemente* (2025) in the case of Italy, and *Stormskerry Maja* (*Myrskyluodon Maija*, 2024) in the case of Finland. The country-specific lists include films that the respondents most probably have watched at school. This could explain the appearance of the silent film *Life of an American Fireman* (US, 1903) and Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* (US, 1960) in Belgium's and Luchino Visconti's *Bellissima* (Italy, 1951) in Spain's top ten list. The data also suggests that *The Phantom of the Opera* (US, 2004) was watched by Spanish students at school.



Few films from outside the United States and Europe feature on lists of recently viewed films. The only exceptions are the New Zealand film series *The Lord of the Rings* and the Japanese production *Perfect Days* directed by the German Wim Wenders.

As the responses were collected over a period of more than a year, some countries' responses include films that had not yet been released when other countries had already finished collecting their responses. One such film is *A Minecraft Movie*, released in spring 2025, which was number one in Poland and mentioned by many of those Finnish respondents who completed the survey in spring 2025.

The results suggest that most of the recently watched films are recent releases, but some long-time favourites also feature, such as the *Harry Potter* and *Shrek* series, which were released over a long period of time. As individual films did not receive many mentions, some films that were mentioned only by respondents from one country made it to the list. *Green Book* and *Stormskerry Maja* were such films, mentioned by Spanish and Finnish respondents respectively.

Table 17: National top ten lists of the last seen films (with the number of mentions). Domestic films are in bold.

TOP 10 last seen films		
Austria	Belgium	Finland
1. <i>Red One</i> (US, 2024) (17)	1. <i>Deadpool & Wolverine</i> (US, 2024) (12)	1. <i>Dune 2</i> (US, 2024) (30)
2. <i>Challengers</i> (Italy, US, 2024) (10)	2. <i>Harry Potter</i> films (UK & US, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011) (10)	2. <i>Stormskerry Maja</i> (Finland, 2024) (17)
3. <i>Smile 2</i> (US, 2024) (9)	3. <i>Anyone But You</i> (US, 2023) (8)	3. <i>Kung Fu Panda 4</i> (US, 2024) (8)
4. <i>Moana/Vaiana 2</i> (US, 2024) (7)	4. <i>Dune 2</i> (US, 2024)	4. <i>Memory of Water</i> (Finland, 2022)
5. <i>Terrifier 3</i> (US, 2024)	<i>Maze Runner</i> films (US, 2014, 2015, 2018)	<i>Luottomies: All in</i> (Finland, 2024) (7)



<i>Deadpool & Wolverine</i> (US, 2024) (6)	<i>Smile</i> (US, 2022)	<i>5. Hunger Games: Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes</i> (US, 2023)
<i>6. The Fast and the Furious</i> (US, 2001, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2021, 2023)	<i>Life of an American Fireman</i> (US, 1903) (7)	<i>Poor Things</i> (Ireland, 2023)
<i>Meet Me Next Christmas</i> (US, 2024)	<i>5. Psycho</i> (US, 1960)	<i>Interstellar</i> (US, 2014)
<i>All Quiet on the Western Front</i> (Germany, US, UK, 2022) (5)	<i>Inside Out 2</i> (US, 2024)	<i>Matrix</i> (1999, 2003, 2003, 2021) (6)
<i>7. Christmas Chronicles</i> (US, 2018)	<i>Home Alone</i> (US, 1990, 1992, 1997) (6)	
<i>Christmas Chronicles 2</i> (US, 2020)	<i>6. Oppenheimer</i> (US, 2023)	<i>6. Anyone but You</i> (US, 2023)
<i>Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone</i> (UK & US, 2001) (4)	<i>Beetlejuice</i> (US, 1988, 2024)	<i>Oppenheimer</i> (US, 2023) (5)
	<i>Venom - the Last Dance</i> (US, 2024) (5)	
	<i>7. Beauty and the Beast</i> (US, 2017)	
	<i>Uglies</i> (US, 2024) (4)	

TOP 10 last seen films		
France	Greece	Italy
1. Beating Hearts (France & Belgium, 2024) (19)	1. <i>Terrifier 3</i> (US, 2024) (14)	1. <i>Inside Out 2</i> (US, 2024) <i>Nosferatu</i> (US, 2024) (11)
2. <i>The Substance</i> (UK & France, 2024) (12)	2. <i>Venom</i> (US, 2018, 2021, 2024) (12)	2. Diamanti (Italy, 2024)



3. The Count of Monte Cristo (France & Italy, 2024) (10)	3. <i>Smile</i> (US, 2022, 2024) (11)	Parthenope (Italy, 2024) (7)
4. <i>Moana 2</i> (US, 2024) (8)	4. <i>Moana/Vaiana 2</i> (US, 2024) (10)	3. Follemente (Italy, 2025) <i>My Fault: London</i> (UK & Spain) <i>The Brutalist</i> (US, 2024) (6)
5. Monsieur Aznavour (France, 2024) <i>My Fault</i> (Spain, 2023) The Tuche Family (France, 2011) (6)	5. <i>It Ends with Us</i> (US, 2024) (9) 6. <i>Joker: Folie à Deux</i> (US, 2024) <i>Interstellar</i> (US, 2014) <i>Nosferatu</i> (US, 2024) <i>Despicable Me</i> (US, 2010, 2013, 2017, 2024) <i>Sonic the Hedgehog 3</i> (US, 2020, 2022, 2024) (6)	4. <i>Joker</i> (US, 2019) <i>Joker: Folie à Deux</i> (US, 2024) <i>Mufasa: The Lion King</i> (US, 2024) <i>The Notebook</i> (US, 2004) <i>The Substance</i> (UK & France, 2024) Vermiglio (Italy, 2024) (5)
6. God Save the Tuche (France, 2025) <i>Oppenheimer</i> (US, 2023) <i>The Wolf of Wall Street</i> (US, 2013) (5)	7. <i>How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days</i> (US, 2003) <i>Saw</i> (US, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2023) <i>Your Fault</i> (Spain, 2024) (5)	5. <i>I'm Still Here</i> (Brazil & France, 2024) <i>Dune 2</i> (US, 2024) <i>Interstellar</i> (US, 2014) I am at the End of the World (Italy, 2025) <i>Oppenheimer</i> (US, 2023) <i>Wicked</i> (US, 2024) (4)
7. <i>Anora</i> (US, 2024) <i>Wicked</i> (US, 2024) (4)		



TOP 10 last seen films		
Poland	Spain	Türkiye
1. <i>A Minecraft Movie</i> (US, 2025) (22)	1. <i>Green Book</i> (US, 2018) (27)	1. <i>Another You</i> (Türkiye, 2025) (8)
2. <i>Dune 2</i> (US, 2024) <i>Challengers</i> (US, 2024) <i>Shrek</i> (US, 2001, 2004, 2007, 2010) (6)	2. <i>Society of the Snow</i> (Spain, 2023) (16)	2. <i>Gladiator</i> (US, 2000. 2024) (5)
	3. <i>Dune 2</i> (US, 2024) <i>American History X</i> (US, 1998) (14)	3. <i>Inside Out</i> films (US, 2015, 2024) (4)
3. <i>The Truman Show</i> (US, 1998) <i>Thunderbolts</i> (US, 2025) <i>Poor Things</i> (Ireland, 2023) <i>Perfect Days</i> (Japan, 2023) <i>Anyone But You</i> (US, 2023) <i>Oppenheimer</i> (US, 2023) (5)	4. <i>Bellissima</i> (Italy, 1951) <i>The Phantom of the Opera</i> (US, 2004) (8)	4. <i>Harry Potter</i> films (UK & US, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011) <i>Ready or Not</i> (US, 2019) (3)
	5. <i>Poor Things</i> (Ireland, 2023) (7)	
	6. <i>The Devil Wears Prada</i> (US, 2006) <i>The Notebook</i> (US, 2005) (6)	



5.2 Favourite Films

Respondents were asked to list their three favourite films without ranking the films. The combined top 15 list of all countries contains 13 US films, one European, and one US–New Zealand co-production (see Table 18). The favourite film, or film series, in the whole data was *Harry Potter* with 265 mentions. Because the majority had written only “Harry Potter” without indicating which of the eight *Harry Potter* films they meant, all *Harry Potters* were counted together. The same process was followed with other films belonging to a series of three or more films, because in many of the answers only the general title was mentioned (such as *Lord of the Rings* or *Fast and the Furious*), and because of this it was not always possible to know which film was meant. The second favourite film was the US space adventure *Interstellar* (2014), which received 241 mentions.

The top 15 list includes mostly films that can be characterised as modern mainstream classics and that are not very recent. *Titanic* (1997) and *Fight Club* (1999), as well as some parts of *Harry Potter*, *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Fast and the Furious* film series, were released in the late 1990s or early 2000s, that is, before most of the respondents were born. The top 15 list indicates the long-standing popularity of such American box-office hits that are more than 25 years old. The only recent films on the list are the latest parts of the *Star Wars*, *Spider-Man*, *Hunger Games*, *The Fast and the Furious* and *Avengers* film series. The most popular films include a strong representation of such franchise films. The list features only one children's film, *Cars*. It is also the only animated film on the list.

The results show the appeal to youth of film series that are based on popular novels, especially the *Harry Potter* and *Hunger Games* films. It is also noteworthy that American director Christopher Nolan has two films on the list: *Interstellar* and *Inception*. The psychological thriller *Fight Club* stands out as a different kind of film in terms of style. It is not targeted at a young audience and it is not as easy to categorise as the other films, but it features three famous actors (Brad Pitt, Edward Norton and Helena Bonham-Carter) and a director (David Fincher) whose other film, *Seven*, was also among the 20 most popular films.

In terms of genres, more than half of the most often mentioned favourite films included in Table 18 can be described as adventure or action films, the rest as combining romance with other elements, such as comedy. The top 15 list recalls the one Jensen & Mitric (2023) compiled for Danish youth, both in terms of the films' nationalities and genres. Both have *Harry Potter* as number one and *Star*



Wars in position four. *Avengers*, *Hunger Games*, *Spider-Man*, *The Fast and the Furious* and *The Lord of the Rings* feature on both lists in addition to some currently popular films.

Table 18: Top 15 favourite films in all case countries with the number of mentions.

TOP 15 Favourite films		
Ranking	Title	Number of mentions
1.	<i>Harry Potter</i> (UK & US, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011)	265
2.	<i>Interstellar</i> (US, 2014)	241
3.	<i>The Notebook</i> (US, 2004)	165
4.	<i>Star Wars</i> (US, 1977, 1983, 1989, 1999, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019)	150
5.	<i>Titanic</i> (US, 1997)	145
6.	<i>Spider-Man</i> (US, 2002, 2004, 2007, 2012, 2014, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2023)	131
7.	<i>The Lord of the Rings</i> (New Zealand, US, 2001, 2002, 2003)	128
8.	<i>Mamma Mia!</i> (US, UK, Germany 2008)	126
9.	<i>Hunger Games</i> (US, 2012–2023)	117
10.	<i>Fight Club</i> (US, 1999)	110
11.	<i>La La Land</i> (US, 2016)	108
12.	<i>The Fast and the Furious</i> (US, 2001, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2021, 2023)	103
13.	<i>Avengers</i> (US, 2012, 2012, 2018, 2019, 2025)	93
14.	<i>Cars</i> (US, 2006, 2011, 2017)	89
15.	<i>Inception</i> (US, 2010)	88



Country-specific lists of top ten films were compiled for comparison purposes (see Table 19). Because of the low number of mentions for individual films, in some countries, films with fewer than ten mentions made it to the top ten list. No striking differences were detected between the country-specific top ten lists of favourite films. Big US productions dominate all nine national top tens, which is not surprising in the light of previous research. Fu (2012, p. 811), who studied national audience tastes in Hollywood film genres using data from 36 countries, found that “in recent years, the Hollywood genre tastes of countries have converged towards those of the U.S. audience”. The dominant role of streaming platforms as a means of watching films has significantly contributed to this situation. Regarding genres, the films are similar to those on the combined list: adventures are the most popular. There are not many films targeted at children or youth. All lists except for French, Italian and Turkish include 1–3 animated or anime films. *Cars*, *Spirited Away*, *Shrek* and *Tangled* are aimed at young audiences, but *Coraline* is an adult animation.

All nine national lists feature at least one non-US film. In most cases those are *Harry Potter* and the New Zealand production *The Lord of the Rings*. The French list features five non-US films, four European and one New Zealand film. The Italian and Finnish lists both include four non-US films, the other national lists fewer. In the Italian case three European and one New Zealand film, in the Finnish case one European, two Japanese and one New Zealand film. France and Italy are the only countries where two domestic films have made it to the top ten; *The Count of Monte Cristo* and *Beating Hearts* in the case of France and *Perfect Strangers* and *There's Still Tomorrow* in the case of Italy.

The winning duo of the top 15 list, *Harry Potter* films and *Interstellar*, are both included in all national top ten lists. *Harry Potter* is number one in Austria, Belgium, Finland and France. *Interstellar* is in the top five of all countries except for Spain. Other films that feature on at least five national lists are *Titanic*, *The Notebook*, *Fight Club* and *Lord of the Rings*. None of these most popular films is recent.

The Turkish top ten list is notable for its number one film, *12 Angry Men* directed by Sidney Lumet and released in 1957. The film was mentioned by 17 Turkish respondents as one of their favourite films. The film received a total of six mentions from the other countries. It is likely that the respondents have viewed the film as part of a university course or at the screening of a film club. Taking all responses to the question on favourite films into account, Turkish responses mention more domestic films and European arthouse films, and generally older films (*Godfather* and *Dead Poets Society*) than responses from the other countries. This may be explained by the fact that the



Turkish respondents were older on average and that there was an active film club in the city where the responses were gathered from. However, Harry Potter is the only European film on the Turkish top ten.

To summarise, our study confirms the findings of earlier studies, showing that American films outnumber European films and films from other continents in the top 15 list of favourite films and the most recently watched films when the results from all nine countries are combined. The favoured content is American and “genre-driven”, to use Jensen and Mitric’s expression (2023, p. 159). However, the picture is more diverse when we look at individual countries, especially regarding the most recently watched films. It thus seems that young people do watch European films, especially recent domestic ones, but they mention mostly US films, many of which are quite old, as their favourites. This suggests that films that are widely distributed, available for long periods of time, and receive a lot of media attention attract young viewers best. Jensen et al. (2021, p. 18) also note that 8 to 17-year-old Danes seem to enjoy films that were not produced for their generation and that this testifies to their continuous accessibility via global content providers. De Donneva (2023) suggested this too for Belgium. The challenge is how to make European films their favourite films.

Harry Potter films emerged as the most often mentioned films in the two survey questions discussed above. They were mentioned in 317 responses, and several responses specifically mentioned more than one Harry Potter film. Harry Potter films have been released over a decade, between 2001 and 2011. Most of the respondents had not been born when the first films were released. This indicates that the films continue to appeal to different ages. The popularity of Harry Potter, and other fantasy films such as *The Lord of the Rings*, may also be explained by the “global rise of fantasy films and literature” that address important issues such as nature (Barker, 2022, p. 793–794). However, if we compare the number of responses in which a Harry Potter film was mentioned to the total number of respondents (4,453), we can see that even these films are not particularly popular. Only about seven percent mentioned a Harry Potter film.

The survey revealed a significant gender imbalance in the directors of the recently watched and favourite films. This is not surprising and reflects the fact that the film industry is still dominated by male directors. A great majority of the last seen films have been directed by men. In the top 15 combined and top ten national lists, seven films were directed or co-directed by women. These are *Substance* (Coralie Fargeat), *Stormskerry Maja* (Tiina Lymi), *Shrek 1* (Vicky Jenson, co-director), *Shrek 2* (Kelly Asbury, co-director), *Venom – the Last Dance* (Kelly Marcel), *Memory of Water* (Saara



Saarela) and *Vermiglio* (Maura Delpero). The combined top 15 list and the national top ten lists of favourite films included also seven films directed by women: *Mamma Mia!* (Phyllida Loyd), *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* (Susan Johnson), *After* (Jenny Gage), *Little Women* (Greta Gerwig), *There's Still Tomorrow* (Paola Cortellesi), *The Parent Trap* and *The Holiday* (Nancy Meyers).

The survey included three of the five biggest film-producing countries in Europe: France, Italy and Spain. The results reveal differences between these countries as regards the preference for domestic films. The top lists of France and Italy both include more domestic films than those of other countries. The Spanish top ten lists, however, include only one domestic production, *Society of the Snow* (2023), as the second most popular last seen film. On the other hand, the Finnish list of the last seen films includes even three domestic films although the Finnish film industry produces a much smaller number of films.

Television series were frequently mentioned in the answers to both questions. This not only reflects the popularity of series, but may also suggest that young people attach more importance to content than form. More important than whether it is a film or a series is the fact that it can be watched on Netflix (cf. Flodin et al., 2024; Will & Agency, 2023).

Table 19: Country-specific lists of top ten favourite films (with the number of mentions). Films with fewer than four mentions are not listed and if more than five films received four mentions, they are not listed. Domestic films are in bold.

TOP 10 of favourite films		
Austria	Belgium	Finland
1. <i>Harry Potter</i> (UK, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011) (35)	1. <i>Harry Potter</i> (UK, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011) (30)	1. <i>Harry Potter</i> (UK, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011) (57)
2. <i>Interstellar</i> (US, 2014) (23)	2. <i>The Avengers</i> (US, 2012, 2012, 2018, 2019, 2025)	2. <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> (New Zealand, US, 2001, 2002, 2003) (39)
3. <i>Home Alone</i> (US, 1990, 1992, 1997) (22)	<i>The Notebook</i> (US, 2004) (21)	3. <i>Interstellar</i> (US, 2014) (38)
4. <i>The Fast and the Furious</i> (US, 2001, 2003, 2006,	3. <i>Interstellar</i> (US, 2014) 20	4. <i>Star Wars</i> (US, 1977, 1983, 1989, 1999, 2002,



2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2021, 2023) (21)		2005, 2008, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019) (33)
5. <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> (New Zealand, US, 2001, 2002, 2003) (16)	4. <i>Cars</i> (US, 2006, 2011, 2017) (19)	5. <i>Mamma Mia!</i> (US, UK, Germany 2008, 2018) (32)
6. <i>The Notebook</i> (US, 2004) (15)	5. <i>10 Things I Hate about You</i> (US, 1999) (18)	6. <i>Titanic</i> (US, 1997) (24)
7. <i>Titanic</i> (US, 1997) (14)	6. <i>Titanic</i> (US, 1997) (15)	7. <i>Howl's Moving Castle</i> (Japan, 2004) (20)
8. <i>Moana/Vaiana</i> (US, 2016, 2024) <i>10 Things I Hate about You</i> (US, 1999) <i>Fight Club</i> (US, 1999) <i>The Hunger Games</i> (US, 2012–2023) (13)	7. <i>Inside Out</i> (US, 2015, 2024) (13)	8. <i>Inception</i> (US, 2010) (18)
9. <i>To All the Boys I've Loved Before</i> (US, 2018) <i>Batman</i> (US, 1989, 1995, 2005, 2008, 2022) <i>Star Wars</i> (US, 1977–2019) <i>Forrest Gump</i> (US, 1994) (12)	8. <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> (New Zealand, US, 2001, 2002, 2003) (11)	9. <i>The Notebook</i> (US, 2005) (17)
10. <i>The Conjuring</i> (US, 2013, 2016, 2021) <i>La La Land</i> (US, 2016) (11)	9. <i>The Fast and the Furious</i> (US, 2001, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2021, 2023) (10)	10. <i>Spirited Away</i> (Japan, 2001) (16)
	10. <i>After</i> (US, 2019) <i>Little Women</i> (US, 2019) <i>The Maze Runner</i> (US, 2014, 2015, 2018) <i>Jumanji</i> (US, 2017, 2019)	



	<i>Shutter Island</i> (US, 2010) <i>Deadpool & Wolverine</i> (US, 2024) <i>Top Gun</i> (US 1986, 2022) <i>Scream</i> (US, 1996, 1997, 2000, 2011, 2022, 2023) (8)	
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France	Greece	Italy
1. <i>Harry Potter</i> (UK, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011) (30)	1. <i>The Notebook</i> (US, 2004) (23)	1. <i>Interstellar</i> (US, 2014) (41)
2. <i>Titanic</i> (US, 1997)	2. <i>Interstellar</i> (US, 2014) (21)	2. <i>The Notebook</i> (US, 2004) (33)
<i>Interstellar</i> (US, 2014) (25)	3. <i>Spider-Man</i> (US, 2002–2023) (20)	3. <i>Inception</i> (US, 2010) (26)
3. <i>Avatar</i> (US, 2009) (18)	4. <i>Harry Potter</i> (UK, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011) (19)	4. <i>Perfect Strangers/Perfetti sconosciuti</i> (Italy, 2016) (21)
4. <i>Spider-Man</i> (US, 2002, 2004, 2007, 2012, 2014, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2023) (16)	5. <i>Fight Club</i> (US, 1999) (18)	5. <i>Forrest Gump</i> (US, 1994)
5. <i>La La Land</i> (US, 2016) (14)	6. <i>Dead Poets Society</i> (US, 1989) (17)	<i>Harry Potter</i> (UK, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011)
6. <i>Forrest Gump</i> (US, 1994) (13)	7. <i>The Avengers</i> (US, 2012–2019)	<i>La La Land</i> (US, 2016) (19)
	<i>The Lord of the Rings</i> (New Zealand, US, 2001, 2002, 2003)	
7. <i>The Count of Monte Cristo</i> (France, 2024)	<i>Titanic</i> (US, 1997) (16)	6. <i>Fight Club</i> (US, 1999) (18)



<i>Beating Hearts</i> (France, 2024) <i>The Green Mile</i> (US, 1999) <i>My Fault</i> (Spain, 2023) <i>Star Wars</i> (US, 1977, 1983, 1989, 1999, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019) (12)		
	8. <i>Godfather</i> (US, 1972, 1974, 1990) (15)	7. <i>There's Still Tomorrow/C'è ancora domani</i> (Italy, 2023) <i>The Devil Wears Prada</i> (US, 2006) (15)
8. <i>The Fast and the Furious</i> (US, 2001, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017, 2021, 2023) <i>Fight Club</i> (US, 1999) (11)	9. <i>La La Land</i> (US, 2016) 10 <i>Things I Hate about You</i> (US, 1999) <i>Shutter Island</i> (US, 2010) (14)	8. <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> (New Zealand, US, 2001, 2002, 2003) <i>Once upon a Time in America</i> (US, 1984) (14)



9. <i>The Devil Wears Prada</i> (US, 2006) (10)	10. <i>Inception</i> (US, 2010) <i>How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days</i> (US, 2003) <i>Cars</i> (US, 2006, 2011, 2017) <i>Star Wars</i> (US, 1977, 1983, 1989, 1999, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019) (13)	9. <i>Shutter Island</i> (US, 2010) <i>Titanic</i> (US, 1997) (13)
10. <i>Dune</i> (US, 2021, 2024) <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> (New Zealand, US, 2001, 2002, 2003) (9)		10. <i>Oppenheimer</i> (US, 2023) (12)

Poland	Spain	Türkiye
1. <i>Star Wars</i> (US, 1977, 1983, 1989, 1999, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019) (41)	1. <i>Mamma Mia!</i> (US, UK, Germany 2008, 2018) (31)	1. <i>12 Angry Men</i> (US, 1957) (17)
2. <i>Harry Potter</i> (UK, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011) (34)	2. <i>The Notebook</i> (US, 2004) (24)	2. <i>Dead Poets Society</i> (US, 1989) (12)



3. <i>Interstellar</i> (US, 2014) (25)	3. <i>The Hunger Games</i> (US, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2023) (23)	3. <i>Harry Potter</i> (UK, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011) (11)
4. <i>Shrek</i> (US, 2001, 2004, 2007, 2010) (22)	4. <i>Titanic</i> (US, 1997) (22)	
5. <i>Fight Club</i> (US, 1999) (21)	5. <i>Dead Poets Society</i> (US, 1989) (20)	4. <i>Godfather</i> (US, 1972, 1974, 1990)
6. <i>The Notebook</i> (US, 2004) (19)	6. <i>Star Wars</i> (US, 1977, 1983, 1989, 1999, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019) (17)	<i>Interstellar</i> (US, 2014) (10)
7. <i>The Lord of the Rings</i> (New Zealand, US, 2001, 2002, 2003) (17)	7. <i>La La Land</i> (US, 2016)	
8. <i>The Devil Wears Prada</i> (US, 2006) (16)	<i>Harry Potter</i> (UK, 2001, 2002, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011) (15)	5. <i>The Matrix</i> (1999, 2003, 2003, 2021)
9. <i>The Hunger Games</i> (US, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2023)	8. <i>The Parent Trap</i> (US, 1998) (13)	<i>Fight Club</i> (US, 1999) (9)
<i>La La Land</i> (US, 2016) (15)		6. <i>Black Swan</i> (US, 2010)
		<i>Dune</i> (US, 2021, 2024)
		<i>Star Wars</i> (US, 1977, 1983, 1989, 1999, 2002, 2005, 2008, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019)
		<i>Seven</i> (US, 1995) (6)
10. <i>The Shawshank Redemption</i> (US, 1994) (14)	9. <i>Tangled</i> (US, 2010)	7. <i>The Holiday</i> (US, 2006) (5)
	<i>Interstellar</i> (US, 2014) (12)	
	10. <i>Spirited Away</i> (Japan, 2001)	
	<i>Spider-Man</i> (US, 2002, 2004, 2007, 2012, 2014, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, 2023)	



	<i>The Lord of the Rings</i> (New Zealand, US, 2001, 2002, 2003) <i>Society of the Snow</i> (Spain, 2023) <i>Little Women</i> (US, 2019) <i>Coraline</i> (US, 2009) (11)	
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The total number of films mentioned in each national dataset reveals some differences between countries (see Table 20). The number of films mentioned per country in question one are smaller, with Türkiye (with a much smaller number of responses) having the smallest number (203) and Austria, the biggest (249). In question two the differences are bigger, probably partly because some respondents mentioned three film titles whereas some mentioned only one. The number of films mentioned is between 420 (Türkiye) and 710 (Italy). It must be remembered that the number of respondents in Türkiye was almost a half the number in the other countries. Also the total numbers of films mentioned per country are approximate as it was not always clear which films were meant.

Table 20³: The approximate number of films mentioned in questions 1 (the most recent film seen) and 2 (three favourite films) per country.

Country	Question 1 Number of films mentioned	Country	Question 2 Number of films mentioned
Austria	349	Italy	710
Poland	338	Austria	648
Finland	313	Poland	645
Belgium	289	Greece	620
Spain	287	Belgium	617
Italy	262	Finland	617
Greece	261	Spain	593

³ Table 20 does not present the countries alphabetically, but sorted by number of films mentioned.



France	255	France	516
Türkiye	203	Türkiye	420

5.3 Film Genres

Film genres are labels or categories according to which films are produced, marketed, viewed and interpreted. Film genres are fluid, meaning they evolve over time, reflecting social and cultural contexts (Altman, 2002). Some genres that were previously popular, such as Western and musical, are no longer as common as they used to be. New genres, subgenres and genre mixtures emerge. Also, terminology changes. Genre terms such as melodrama are rarely used nowadays even though films with that kind of content are still made. Noir used to be a term associated with a particular type of crime film, but today it is used more often about television crime series produced in the Nordic countries. Hollywood films have always included elements of different genres, but today genre-mixing has intensified. With competition from various other forms of entertainment, films, particularly US blockbusters, are targeted at a wider audience. This means intentionally combining elements from a variety of genres to appeal to different audience segments. The result is what might be called genre hybrids.

Genres can be categorised in various ways, more broadly or in detail. In our survey, a rather broad categorisation was used. Sub-genre categories were not used except in the case of animated films. The respondents were asked to choose as many favourite genres as they wished from a list of 17 genres plus the option “other”, in which they could write a genre that was missing from the list.

Genre categorisation is also subjective and context-specific. Presumably, young people across Europe may categorise films in slightly different ways. Recent Danish study suggests that genre categories are not the main criterion for choosing films among today's youth. According to the study, genre awareness grows with age. 15–18-year-olds are more aware of genres and genre elements than younger people, but “generally are not fans of genres”. Young people want films to contain a little bit of this and that, elements of different genres (Will & Agency, 2023, p. 66).

Based on the responses, the top five genres are comedy, action, drama, romance, and adventure (see Table 21). These most popular genres are extremely diverse in terms of content and style and they typically contain elements from other popular genres, often making them genre hybrids. The first position of comedy (61.8%) is clear compared to the second most popular genre, action (49.5%).



The difference in the popularity of action, drama (46.9%), romance (46.1%) and adventure (43.1%) is much smaller. The sixth popular genre is crime (37.8%) followed by fantasy, thriller, animation, horror and sci-fi. The popularity of comedy is not surprising in itself, but it is interesting that comedies do not feature highly on the list of the most popular films. Many of the popular films include comic elements, but none of the films is a straightforward comedy. It has been noted that comedies do not travel as well as genres that are less culturally specific (Fu, 2012, p. 793, 812). This may be one reason why comedies do not feature on the list of the most popular films.

The five most popular genres reflect young people's fascination with fast-paced and exciting films. This aligns with the KIDS Regio's study (Flodin et al., 2024), which showed that children aged 7–11 prefer content that is exciting, entertaining and humorous. Our results suggest that these preferences remain rather similar among older youth. However, the high popularity of dramas indicates that young people are also interested in slower-paced films. Below, we examine how age affected genre preference within our data.

The least popular genre was Western (7.5%), followed by anime (18.6%), musical (20.4%) and war (21.1%). The low popularity of Western films recalls what Rick Altman (2002) observed, that some genres lose their popularity over time. The Western is a case in point and it is easy to understand why it may have become unpopular and even unfamiliar to young people. Western and other less popular genres, such as historical and war, are more specific in terms of content and visuals, and do not usually mix as many elements as the most popular genres. It seems that genres mixing elements from films of different styles are chosen as favourites more often than "more specific" genres, even fantasy or sci-fi. Fantasy is a central element in *Harry Potter* and *The Lord of the Rings* and *Star Wars*, which were among the ten most popular films. However, fantasy is only the seventh most popular genre. Perhaps these films are not regarded primarily as fantasies because of their hybrid character. Sci-fi is in the 11th place on the list, although the very popular films *Interstellar* and *Star Wars* can be categorised as sci-fi films. Both films take place in the future and space, and focus on technology. Musical, documentary and anime are also among the least popular genres. The low popularity of anime, Japanese animation, may be partly explained by the fact that it was mentioned as a separate category, in addition to animation. Yet, anime films, such as *Spirited Away*, were mentioned a lot as favourite films.

The findings concerning genres are similar to those of Soto-Sanfiel et al. (2021, p. 129, 135), who also found that action, comedy and adventure are the most popular genres and Western one of the



least popular. It should be noted, however, that they used different genre categories in their survey, including for example avant-garde, and that the respondents could choose between one and three options. The results also differ in some regard: Soto-Sanfiel et al. found that historical and crime films were among the least liked. In our study these genres performed better. Crime was the sixth most popular genre and historical film was in position 12 out of the 18 options. A look at national genre preferences shows that crime was in the top ten in some of the countries.

5.3.1 National Genre Preferences

Relatively little research has been done on national differences in film genre preferences. As Fu (2012, p. 790) points out: "Little is yet known about the choices made by national populations en masse with regard to globally prominent genres, or how these respond to underpinnings such as culture and language, despite their academic and practical importance." Even less is known about the choices made by young people representing different nationalities and reasons behind their choices. The study by Soto-Sanfiel et al. (2021) is one of the few to explore the national genre choices. In our study we explored the genre preferences of young people, but we did not ask which aspects of culture affected their choices. The national genre preferences are listed in Table 22.

Comedy was clearly the most popular and Western equally clearly the least popular genre in all the nine countries. Spain (68.8%) has the greatest preference for comedy, while Italy (52.5%) has the least. This observation was also statistically significant at the 1% level ($\chi^2(8, N = 4,423) = 49.291, p < .001$, SR 2.0 for Spain and SR -2.8 for Italy).

Crosstabulation and chi-square tests revealed statistically significant associations between national datasets and other preferred genres at the 1% level. The second most popular genre, action, is in the top three in all countries except for Italy, Poland and Türkiye. Action films are most popular in Greece (63.1%) and the least popular in Poland (30.8%), ($\chi^2(8, N = 4,423) = 203.511, p < .001$, SR 4.3 for Greece and SR -6.0 for Poland). The third most popular genre, drama, is preferred the most by Finns (60.4%), and the least by the French (35.3%), ($\chi^2(8, N = 4,423) = 112.849, p < .001$, SR 4.7 for Finland and SR -3.4 for France). Romance was the most popular genre in Spain (62.7%) with a much bigger percentage than in the other countries and the least popular in Poland (33.9%) with a much smaller percentage than in the other countries ($\chi^2(8, N = 4,423) = 100.013, p < .001$, SR 5.4 for Spain and SR -4.1 for Poland). The fifth most popular genre, adventure, is liked the most in Greece (61.5%) and the least in Poland (27.3%), ($\chi^2(8, N = 4,423) = 185.666, p < .001$, SR 6.2 for



Greece and SR -5.4 for Poland). Poland is the only country where horror is in the top five (34.9%), Italy the only country with thriller in the top five (37.4%), and Finland the only country with fantasy in the top five (53.2%) with a marked difference to Türkiye, where fantasy has the second largest preference (36.5%). The results for the countries are consistent in that Western is the least popular (pre-given) genre in all of them.

The results are in some respects similar to those of Soto-Sanfiel et al., although in their survey respondents were only allowed to choose between 1 and 3 options. They also report that Spaniards chose romance as a preferred genre more often than the others and that Italians had the least preference for comedy. However, in their study, preference for romance was generally lower than in ours (Soto-Sanfiel et al. 2021, p. 129). In our study, four countries (Belgium, Italy, Spain, and Türkiye) had romance in the top three.

Table 21: Favourite film genres in total and in case countries (% of respondents liking the genre).

Genre	Total (%)	AU	BE	FI	FR	GR	IT	PO	SP	TÜ
comedy	61.8	64.2	56.9	64.4	63.7	66.2	52.5	63.4	68.8	56.1
action	49.5	55.2	53.4	58.3	56.6	63.1	37.0	30.8	53.4	37.8
drama	46.9	41.1	44.4	60.4	35.3	40.7	42.7	58.5	49.6	44.6
romance	46.1	49.9	42.9	47.5	41.1	48.7	41.6	33.9	62.7	46.2
adventure	43.1	42.3	36.1	55.0	42.9	61.5	33.5	27.3	44.7	45.2
crime	37.8	38.2	34.5	42.0	20.6	54.0	29.4	36.8	47.5	34.2
fantasy	35.7	35.0	27.6	53.2	35.1	35.0	32.6	27.9	36.1	36.5
thriller	35.2	28.4	32.1	40.8	31.3	38.9	37.4	30.6	38.3	38.8
animation	34.3	26.8	21.4	43.3	34.8	41.5	35.4	27.1	39.1	39.8
horror	32.6	36.0	30.0	31.5	32.8	39.3	22.1	34.9	40.2	27.0
sci-fi	31.1	29.7	19.8	35.2	33.1	36.5	24.7	25.5	42.6	34.4
historical	27.3	29.7	17.1	37.7	22.3	25.7	29.5	20.5	30.7	30.1
documentary	22.3	26.4	14.7	36.1	13.8	21.0	19.8	23.2	20.9	20.7



war	21.2	22.1	25.4	24.7	16.5	27.5	16.7	19.7	18.6	18.1
musical	20.4	17.6	11.1	27.1	15.8	20.8	15.1	22.8	34.8	17.1
anime	18.6	20.5	7.7	24.9	30.3	17.5	20.5	11.7	17.8	17.6
Western	7.5	5.3	1.8	10.2	7.3	6.1	9.1	10.5	8.4	8.2
other	3.4	3.7	4.2	3.5	3.3	3.7	4.6	1.4	3.7	2.3

Table 22: Country-specific genre preferences in order of preference. The most often mentioned “other” genre is mentioned in brackets if one type of film gained more mentions than others.

Austria		Belgium		Finland	
Genre	%	Genre	%	Genre	%
1. comedy	64.2	1. comedy	56.9	1. comedy	64.4
2. action	55.2	2. action	53.4	2. drama	60.4
3. romance	49.9	3. drama	44.4	3. action	58.3
4. adventure	42.3	4. romance	42.9	4. adventure	55.0
5. drama	41.1	5. adventure	36.1	5. fantasy	53.2
6. crime	38.2	6. crime	34.5	6. romance	47.5
7. horror	36.0	7. thriller	32.1	7. animation	43.3
8. fantasy	35.0	8. horror	30.0	8. crime	42.0
9. sci-fi	29.7	9. fantasy	27.6	9. thriller	40.8
10. historical	29.7	10. war	25.4	10. historical	37.7
11. thriller	28.4	11. animation	21.4	11. documentary	36.1
12. animation	26.8	12. sci-fi	19.8	12. sci-fi	35.2
13. documentary	26.4	13. historical	17.1	13. horror	31.5
14. war	22.1	14. documentary	14.7	14. musical	27.1
15. anime	20.5	15. musical	11.1	15. anime	24.9
16. musical	17.6	16. anime	7.7	16. war	24.7



17. Western	5.3	17. other (drama)	4.2	17. Western	10.2
18. other (sports)	3.7	18. Western	1.8	18. other (indie)	3.5

France		Greece		Italy	
Genre	%	Genre	%	Genre	%
1. comedy	63.7	1. comedy	66.2	1. comedy	52.5
2. action	56.6	2. action	63.1	2. drama	42.7
3. adventure	42.9	3. adventure	61.5	3. romance	41.6
4. romance	41.1	4. crime	54.0	4. thriller	37.4
5. drama	35.3	5. romance	48.7	5. action	37.0
6. fantasy	35.1	6. animation	41.5	6. animation	35.4
7. animation	34.8	7. drama	40.7	7. adventure	33.5
8. sci-fi	33.1	8. horror	39.3	8. fantasy	32.6
9. horror	32.8	9. thriller	38.9	9. historical	29.5
10. thriller	31.3	10. sci-fi	36.5	10. crime	29.4
11. anime	30.3	11. fantasy	35.0	11. sci-fi	24.7
12. historical	22.3	12. war	27.5	12. horror	22.1
13. crime	20.6	13. historical	25.7	13. anime	20.5
14. war	16.5	14. documentary	21.0	14. documentary	19.8
15. musical	15.8	15. musical	20.8	15. war	16.7
16. documentary	13.8	16. anime	17.5	16. musical	15.1
17. Western	7.3	17. Western	6.1	17. Western	9.1
18. other (K-drama)	3.3	18. other	3.7	18. other (cult)	4.6



Poland		Spain		Türkiye	
Genre	%	Genre	%	Genre	%
1. comedy	63.4	1. comedy	68.8	1. comedy	56.1
2. drama	58.5	2. romance	62.7	2. romance	46.2
3. crime	36.8	3. action	53.4	3. adventure	45.2
4. horror	34.9	4. drama	49.6	4. drama	44.6
5. romance	33.9	5. crime	47.5	5. animation	39.8
6. action	30.8	6. adventure	44.7	6. thriller	38.8
7. thriller	30.6	7. sci-fi	42.6	7. action	37.8
8. fantasy	27.9	8. horror	40.2	8. fantasy	36.5
9. adventure	27.3	9. animation	39.1	9. sci-fi	34.4
10. animation	27.1	10. thriller	38.3	10. crime	34.2
11. sci-fi	25.5	11. fantasy	36.1	11. historical	30.1
12. documentary	23.2	12. musical	34.8	12. horror	27.0
13. musical	22.8	13. historical	30.7	13. documentary	20.7
14. historical	20.5	14. documentary	20.9	14. war	18.1
15. war	19.7	15. war	18.6	15. anime	17.6
16. anime	11.7	16. anime	17.8	16. musical	17.1
17. Western	10.5	17. Western	8.4	17. Western	8.2
18. other	1.4	18. other (mystery)	3.7	18. other (experimental)	2.3

5.3.2 Genre Preferences Cross-Analysed with Other Variables

Next, we explore young people's genre preferences in the context of their background information (Table 23). According to film scholar Torben Grodal (2017), genre preferences are determined by



biology and evolution in addition to culture. Grodal, who bases his study on evolutionary psychology and cognitive film studies, states that “the factors that most determine the relation between genres and viewer preferences are based on biology, namely age and gender, two important biological determinants”, and refers to empirical studies that confirm this. Younger people prefer genres that contain more fantasy whereas older people prefer more realistic genres. Gender is an even stronger determinant of genre preferences, which according to Grodal “follow gender stereotypes”. Women like romantic films and genres that rely on social intelligence such as crime and costume drama, while men prefer genres that contain violence, such as war, science fiction and Western (Grodal, 2017, p. 7). A similar connection between gender and genre was also shown by Veenstra et al. (2020), who use the terms “active genres” of genres preferred by male and “more quiescent genres” of genres preferred by female respondents.

According to our study, correlation between genre preference and age is the clearest with horror and documentary. Of these two genres, horror is the genre favoured by younger respondents (age mean 17.8), while documentaries and historical films are preferred by older respondents (age mean 19.9 and 19.5). Crosstabulation and chi-square tests confirm significant associations at the 1% level between age, i.e. minors (aged 12–17) versus adults (aged 18–24), and most of the genres studied. In our sample, minors preferred horror films ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,288) = 105.597, p < .001$, SR 6.6 for minors and -5.2 for adults) and action ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,288) = 26.943, p < .001$, SR 2.9 for minors and -2.3 for adults) more than adults. Adults, on the other hand, preferred more drama ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,288) = 143.162, p < .001$, SR -6.9 for minors and 5.3 for adults), romance ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,288) = 57.010, p < .001$, SR -4.4 for minors and 3.4 for adults), sci-fi ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,288) = 63.147, p < .001$, SR -5.2 for minors and 4.0 for adults), fantasy ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,288) = 28.625, p < .001$, SR -3.4 for minors and 2.6 for adults), thriller ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,288) = 66.007, p < .001$, SR -5.2 for minors and 4.0 for adults), historical films ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,288) = 135.605, p < .001$, SR -7.8 for minors and 6.1 for adults), musicals ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,288) = 66.243, p < .001$, SR -5.7 for minors and 4.5 for adults), Western ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,288) = 17.868, p < .001$, SR -3.2 for minors and 2.5 for adults), documentary ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,288) = 141.723, p < .001$, SR -8.3 for minors and 6.4 for adults), animation ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,288) = 102.151, p < .001$, SR -6.5 for minors and 5.0 for adult), and anime ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,288) = 31.691, p < .001$, SR -4.0 for minors and 3.1 for adult). The results indicate that adults prefer a more diverse range of genres than minors do. The results may also suggest that genre names were unfamiliar to the younger respondents. This could explain why animation and fantasy, genres typically associated with children's films, were more often preferred by adults than minors.



All genders liked comedy the most. The biggest gender difference in genre preferences was for romance (female 62.3% versus male 17.3%). The second biggest difference was preference for war films (male 36.3% versus female 13.4%). This result thus supports earlier research that has identified romance as a “female genre”. Musical was also clearly a “female genre” and sci-fi a “male genre”. The difference was the smallest for fantasy, crime and documentary. Those who identified as non-binary liked non-realistic genres such as fantasy, sci-fi, animation and anime more than those who identified as binary.

The crosstabulation and chi-square test results highlight the gendered nature of film genre preferences. At the 1% level of statistical significance, female respondents preferred more romance ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,277) = 778.522, p < .001$, SR 12.4 for female and -16.0 for male) drama ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,277) = 93.833, p < .001$, SR 4.0 for female and -5.4 for male) and musicals ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,277) = 144.255, p < .001$, SR 6.2 for female and -8.6 for male). Male respondents, on the other hand, preferred action ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,277) = 65.194, p < .001$, SR -3.3 for female and 4.7 for male), sci-fi ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,277) = 100.971, p < .001$, SR -5.0 for female and 6.2 for male), war ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,277) = 291.059, p < .001$, SR -8.9 for female and 12.3 for male), historical films ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,277) = 31.877, p < .001$, SR -2.7 for female and 3.7 for male), Western ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,277) = 119.709, p < .001$, SR -6.3 for female and 8.4 for male), anime ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,277) = 57.555, p < .001$, SR -3.1 for female and 2.5 for male) and adventure ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,277) = 15.698, p < .001$, SR > -1.96 for female and 2.3 for male). A statistically significant association was found at the 1% level between non-binary gender and preferences for anime (SR = 5.0), thrillers (SR = 2.4) and sci-fi (SR = 2.0).

There was a difference in the preferences of those who had received film education and those who had not. The biggest difference in percentages occurred in relation to drama ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,075) = 30.463, p < .001$, SR 3.4) and animation ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,075) = 54.439, p < .001$, SR 5.0), which those with film education preferred more. These differences were also statistically significant at the 1% level. Moreover, crosstabulation and chi-square tests indicate a statistically significant association with film education and preference for musicals ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,075) = 66.728, p < .001$, SR 6.1), documentary ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,075) = 25.775, p < .001$, SR 3.7), historical films ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,075) = 20.181, p < .001$, SR 3.2), Western ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,075) = 14.972, p < .001$, SR 3.1), sci-fi ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,075) = 16.614, p < .001$, SR 2.8), thriller ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,075) = 12.332, p < .001$, SR 2.4) and fantasy ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,075) = 11.066, p < .001$, SR 2.2). Action, horror, and adventure were the only genres that those without film education liked slightly more, but the association between these variables was not statistically significant. In case of these genre preferences, non-education intersects with age: The



respondents who liked these three genres were relatively younger than those who liked other genres. In general, film education seems to broaden young people's preferences for different film genres.

There seems to be no regular pattern between genre preferences and film viewing frequency. The same two genres, comedy and action, are the favourites of those who say they watch films every day and those who watch films less than a few times a year. Even those who claim that they never watch films mention comedy and action as their most preferred genres. Those respondents who liked Westerns the most watched films most frequently and those who liked documentaries the most watched films the least. This suggests that those who watch films the most frequently are also interested in the less common fiction genres, such as Western. What then explains the preference for documentaries among those who watch films the least? Documentary was one of the least preferred genres, but it also differs from the other genres in that it is non-fictional. It may be thus that those respondents who rarely watch fiction films still like to watch non-fictional content.

Crosstabulation and chi-square tests indicate statistically significant associations at the 1% level between genre preferences and film viewing frequency. However, it is difficult to recognise regular patterns in the results. As previously mentioned, individuals who watch films daily (SR = 3.6) or weekly (SR = 2.5) expressed a stronger preference for Westerns than those who watch films a few times a month (SR = -2.8) or a few times a year (SR = -2.1) ($\chi^2(5, N = 4,312) = 34.352, p < .001$). Moreover, those who watch films daily (SR = 3.1) preferred horror movies more than those who watch films only a few times a year (SR = -2.3), ($\chi^2(5, N = 4,312) = 31.047, p < .001$). Similarly those who watch films daily (SR = 2.3) or weekly (SR = 2.9) preferred more thrillers than those who watch films only a few times a year (SR = -4.5), ($\chi^2(5, N = 4,312) = 58.298, p < .001$). Those who watch films only a few times a year disliked drama ($\chi^2(5, N = 4,312) = 32.595, p < .001$, SR = -2.8) and romance ($\chi^2(5, N = 4,312) = 21.457, p < .001$, SR = -2.7) more than others. However, as mentioned above, these respondents preferred significantly more documentaries (SR = 3.2) than those who watch films every day (SR = -2.2), ($\chi^2(5, N = 4,312) = 21.852, p < .001$).



Table 23: Film genres and demographic and background factors of the respondents who like them.

Genre	Age mean of respondents who liked the genre	% of female / male / other who liked the genre	% of respondents received film education* / not received film education who liked the genre	Mean of film watching frequency** of the respondents who liked the genre
comedy	18.5	62.8 / 60.6 / 62.5	64.2 / 61.1	2.65
action	18.2	45.1 / 58.3 / 45.3	46.8 / 51.0	2.60
drama	19.2	54.2 / 37.4 / 57.8	53.2 / 43.1	2.56
romance	18.9	62.3 / 17.3 / 26.6	48.5 / 46.2	2.58
adventure	18.4	41.1 / 47.3 / 40.6	42.6 / 44.6	2.63
crime	18.5	38.1 / 38.5 / 31.3	41.1 / 36.5	2.57
fantasy	18.9	35.4 / 35.3 / 43.8	40.1 / 34.4	2.61
thriller	19.1	34.0 / 37.1 / 53.1	39.3 / 33.3	2.50
animation	19.2	35.3 / 31.1 / 42.2	42.7 / 31.0	2.60
horror	17.8	31.5 / 34.7 / 39.1	30.6 / 33.2	2.54
sci-fi	19.1	25.7 / 40.3 / 45.3	35.8 / 29.5	2.56
historical	19.5	24.7 / 32.6 / 35.9	32.6 / 24.9	2.58
documentary	19.9	22.1 / 23.0 / 28.1	27.6 / 20.0	2.71
war	18.4	13.4 / 36.3 / 20.3	23.1 / 19.7	2.55
musical	19.4	26.0 / 10.2 / 26.6	28.9 / 17.5	2.57
anime	19.0	16.1 / 21.5 / 45.3	21.5 / 17.6	2.60
Western	19.4	4.2 / 13.6 / 9.4	10.1 / 5.9	2.38

** Received film education at school or university as compulsory or voluntary lessons or at a film club in free time.

* Scale of 1 = every day, 2 = every week, 3 = a few times a month, 4 = a few times a year, 5 = more rarely, 6 = never.

When assessing the above findings, it is important to bear in mind the changing importance of genres as part of young people's viewing habits. The possible decline in the importance of genres is probably due, at least in part, to the fact that video rental stores, where films were classified by genre, are a thing of the past. Streaming services tend to classify films in slightly different ways. The above analysis shows that especially the more traditional genres are not very popular among young people.

5.4 Important Elements in Films

In addition to genre preferences the survey asked the young people which aspects (or “things”) of films are important to them. They could choose as many options as they wanted from a list of 11



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



options plus “other”, under which they could add a thing that was missing from the list. The options included “nothing in particular”. The impact of age, gender, received film education and film watching frequency on what were considered important things in films was also explored (Table 24).

The findings reveal that young people think the three most important things in films are topics (68.5%), narratives (67.6%) and emotions (59.0%). Actors/actresses (46.3%) and soundtrack (44.9%) come next. Other studies reveal similar results. Soto-Sanfiel et al. (2021, p. 129) asked which aspects “best define the quality of a film” and found that plot, actors and soundtrack were considered the most important. The term plot was not used in our study, but narrative/story can be understood to mean more or less the same thing, so the results are very similar. However, the range of options was different in the two surveys. According to a recent Danish study by Will and Agency (2023, p. 69), characters were more important than story, plot or themes to youth between the ages of 7 and 18, in particular to 15–18-year-olds: “When the 15–18-year-old participants describe the content to which they are drawn, it is remarkable to what extent the group is focused on character and how little they are concerned with the story, plot, and themes.” In our survey, characters as such were not an option. Instead we asked if character diversity was important. Therefore the results of the two surveys cannot be considered directly comparable. The fact that topics/themes and narratives/stories were considered the most important things in films suggests that the results of these two studies may be to some extent contradictory. However, actors and actresses were considered the fourth most important thing in films, which may also be interpreted as indicating the importance of characters. The importance of actors and actresses for the youngest respondents may be because younger viewers may look for objects of identification in films more keenly than older viewers. Film characters will be explored in more detail in section 7.

The least often chosen options were location, filmmakers and “nothing in particular”. Only 15.6% chose filmmaker as an important thing in films and those who did had the highest age mean (19.52), which suggests that awareness of and appreciation of filmmakers increases with age and that slightly younger respondents (mean age 18.53) consider actors and actresses, the potential objects of identification, more important. Similar findings were made in research conducted for the Danish Film Institute among 7 to 18-year-old Danes; the interviewees hardly mentioned any names of the creators behind films. Yet the young people expressed an interest in building a closer relationship with film creators, similar to the one they already have with people in the music industry and social media influencers (Will & Agency, 2023, p. 50). This refers to parasocial relationships with famous



people. Such a relationship is one-way and has a different meaning for the parties involved (Rotola-Pukkila & Isotalus, 2021).

The most significant differences between female and male respondents regarding important things in films concerned emotions (66.7% and 45.6%) and actors/actresses (50.9% and 39.7%), which female respondents considered more important, and filmmakers (12.7% and 20.8%) and special effects (18.5% and 30.9%), which were more important to male respondents. These differences are confirmed by crosstabulation and chi-square tests at the 1% level. Regarding emotions, the results show an SR of 5.1 for female and -6.6 for male ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,269) = 176.114, p < .001$); for actors and actresses, an SR of 3.2 for female and -3.8 for male ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,270) = 53.178, p < .001$); for filmmakers, an SR of -3.7 for female and 5.0 for male ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,270) = 46.473, p < .001$); and for special effects, an SR of -4.8 for female and 6.3 for male ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,268) = 83.490, p < .001$) respondents. It is worth noting that “emotions” is more open to interpretation than the other options. Emotions can be understood either as qualities of the film or as referring to the film experience. In other words, emotions can refer to the emotions the story deals with and are expressed by characters, or to the emotions the film evokes in the spectator. Those who identified as non-binary considered diversity of characters ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,270) = 16.237, p < .001, SR = 2.6$) and costumes ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,270) = 33.550, p < .001, SR = 2.6$) more important than binary respondents.

Respondents who selected filmmakers as an important aspect of film had the highest mean age. Age also seemed to have an impact on choices other than filmmaker. The average age was lowest among the respondents who chose location, actors/actresses, and diversity of characters as important things in films. Those who answered “nothing in particular” had the lowest average age. This may indicate that it was difficult for the youngest respondents to distinguish between the various options.

Crosstabulation and chi-square tests revealed statistically significant associations at the 1% level between respondents' choices of important film aspects and their categorisation as minors or adults. Adults valued more than minors film topics ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,278) = 203.720, p < .001, SR 4.9$ for adults, and -6.3 for minors), stories ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,279) = 286.639, p < .001, SR 5.9$ for adults, and -7.6 for minors), emotions ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,280) = 169.480, p < .001, SR 5.1$ for adults, and -6.6 for minors), filmmakers ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,281) = 79.039, p < .001, SR 5.0$ for adults, and -6.5 for minors) and soundtrack ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,281) = 117.517, p < .001, SR 4.9$ for adults, and -6.3 for minors). Minors valued special effects more than adults ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,279) = 64.013, p < .001, SR -4.3$ for adults, and



5.5 for minors) or chose, as mentioned above, that nothing in particular is important ($\chi^2(1, N = 4.279) = 167.499, p < .001$, SR -7.7 for adults, and 10.0 for minors).

Film education slightly impacted young people's notions of what they consider important in films. Those who had received film education considered all listed dimensions more often as important than those without film education. The only exceptions were special effects and locations, which were considered slightly more often important by those who had not received any film education. The differences between the respondents with and without film education were in general small. The only statistically significant differences at the 1% level were found in the answer option of filmmakers ($\chi^2(1, N = 4.068) = 46.291, p < .001$, SR = 5.2 for those who received a film education, and SR = -3.4 for those who did not) and sound track ($\chi^2(1, N = 4.068) = 35.938, p < .001$, SR = 3.7 for those who received a film education, and SR = -2.4 for those who did not).

Film watching frequency had some impact on what the respondents considered important in films. The biggest difference can be noted in the case of filmmakers: Those who watch films more frequently considered filmmakers more important in films than those who watch films less frequently. Crosstabulation and chi-square tests revealed that individuals who watched films daily (SR = 4.1) or weekly (SR = 4.5) valued filmmakers significantly more than those who watched films a few times a month (SR = -3.6) or few times a year (SR = -4.1) ($\chi^2(5, N = 4.305) = 82.388, p < .001$). A similar tendency was observed with actors and actresses, who were valued more by respondents who watched films weekly (SR = 2.1) than by those who watched films a few times a year (SR = -2.9) ($\chi^2(5, N = 4.305) = 40.471, p < .001$). The same was true for soundtrack, which was valued more by respondents who watched films weekly (SR = 3.1) than by those who watched films a few times a year (SR = -2.6) ($\chi^2(5, N = 4.305) = 58.241, p < .001$). In this question, the respondents could also select "other" and add their own response. 6.2% of respondents selected "other", and 159 open responses were provided. Among the "other" important things mentioned, the following stood out: animation style, camerawork/cinematography/filming style, acting/performance, visuality/visual aesthetics, colours and plot.



Table 24: Important elements in films.

Things in film	Percentage of respondents considering important	Age mean	Female / male / other %	Received film education* / not received film education %	Mean of film watching frequency**
topics/themes	68.5	19.02	71.0/65.0/70.3	72.7/68.2	2.63
narratives/stories	67.6	19.12	67.6/69.4/62.5	72.8/66.8	2.65
emotions	59.0	19.08	66.7/45.6/54.7	62.7/59.2	2.62
actors/actresses	46.3	18.53	50.9/39.7/37.5	47.3/46.2	2.54
soundtrack	44.9	19.05	45.1/44.8/42.2	52.2/45.0	2.53
diversity of characters	30.6	18.61	31.3/28.3/48.4	33.0/31.2	2.65
special effects	22.9	17.55	18.5/30.9/28.1	21.7/23.4	2.56
costumes	20.0	18.63	21.8/15.6/34.4	22.7/20.1	2.55
location	19.0	18.52	17.9/21.0/15.6	18.6/19.0	2.61
filmmakers	15.6	19.52	12.7/20.8/17.2	21.3/15.4	2.36
nothing in particular	5.1	15.51	4.1/6.7/9.4	4.6/5.3	2.66

** Received film education at school or university as compulsory or voluntary lessons or at a film club in free time.

* Scale of 1 = every day, 2 = every week, 3 = a few times a month, 4 = a few times a year, 5 = more rarely, 6 = never.

We also examined the most important things in films by country (see Table 25). Topics/themes, which was considered the most important thing in all datasets combined, was the most important in Spain (80.1%) and the least important in Türkiye (52.6%). There was an equally big difference concerning narratives/stories between Belgium (83.9%) and Greece (48.3%). Actors/actresses (59.5%) and filmmakers (22.7%) were considered more important by Greeks than by others. Actors/actresses were considered the least important in Italy (37.5%) and filmmakers the least important in Belgium (10.7%). Opinions also differed significantly on the soundtrack, with 65.4% of



Spaniards having chosen it, but only 28.8% of Belgians. Diversity of characters was more important to Finns (49.7%) than to others. It was the least important to Belgians (16.5%). As these percentages show, there were notable differences between the case countries regarding this issue. Crosstabulation and chi-square tests revealed statistically significant associations between each answer option and the case countries at the 1% level. However, it is difficult to identify relevant patterns in the results or explain the reasons for the differences.

Table 25: *Important things in films in case countries.*

Important things in films	AU	BE	FI	FR	GR	IT	PO	SP	TÜ
topics/themes	74.1	60.9	80.0	69.9	68.5	69.0	57.0	80.1	52.6
narratives/stories	65.1	83.9	82.5	53.8	48.3	68.7	56.2	67.8	80.3
emotions	60.6	41.7	60.9	65.4	62.8	63.7	61.9	60.5	52.3
diversity of characters	34.1	16.5	49.7	30.3	33.3	21.9	41.8	17.6	26.9
filmmakers	13.9	10.7	12.4	12.1	22.7	18.0	19.6	11.3	19.7
actors/actresses	43.1	41.7	49.2	46.2	59.5	37.5	44.9	53.3	41.3
costumes	14.5	15.3	23.8	17.4	18.2	17.8	26.3	28.3	16.4
special effects	18.4	19.2	20.3	29.5	28.8	17.4	25.9	33.1	14.6
soundtrack	52.4	28.8	32.2	44.4	54.4	44.8	44.6	65.4	37.9
location	15.7	14.5	27.1	21.2	26.4	15.3	9.1	15.8	28.2
nothing in particular	4.3	4.6	4.4	4.0	7.2	1.8	14.2	1.2	3.6



6 YOUNG CREATORS: VIDEO AND FILMMAKING

This section examines children's and young people's participation in film-related events, such as film festivals and film clubs. In it, we explore whether young people received any compulsory or voluntary film education or they are autodidacts. Our focus here is on children and young people as creators of audiovisual content, videos and films. Based on the empirical data, we analyse what kind of content children and young people create, why and in what context, how they do it, with what technological tools, and how and with whom they share their creations.

6.1 European Film Literacy

Culture and film is a central strategic field of the EU. After the merging of the European Commission's cultural funding programmes into Creative Europe, "audience development and film education" is a central goal as part of the Audience cluster of Creative Europe MEDIA (European Commission, n.d.). As part of film education actions, the Commission expects to "stimulate interest and increase knowledge of audiences in European films and audiovisual works including specific programmes on film heritage", "strengthen pan-European cooperation for innovative audience development and film education projects especially using new digital tools", "increase pan-European impact and audience outreach" and "develop film education projects across European and non-European territories" (EACEA, 2022). EU cinema literacy projects therefore are intended to work as tools for increasing audiences' interest – especially that of young audiences – in European film products and to increase competitiveness of the European film industries. Soto-Sanfiel, Villegas-Simón and Angulo-Brunet (2018) argue that European film literacy projects could potentially serve as a counterweight to the dominant position that Hollywood and the US film industry hold in Europe and the world and Reid (2018, p. 7) emphasises the explicit transnational and pan-European focus of Creative Europe's funding, yet notes that while "these funded projects are explicitly transnational through the involvement of multiple partners, whether they express a common 'Europeanness' is a different question".

EU initiatives have played an important role for film literacy and active participation, shifting the audiovisual and media sectors from national into European borders (Sarikakis et al., forthcoming). One such initiative is the European Film Club, funded by Creative Europe MEDIA aiming to culturally engage young people, aged 12 to 19, establishing a network where young people can exchange about European films (European Film Club, n.d.).



6.2 Youth on Engagement with Film

Based on the empirical data, the study examined whether young people have taken any film-related course either at school or university, in compulsory or voluntary (non-compulsory, optional) lessons, or whether they taught themselves. Just over half of the participants (54.5%) reported that they have not attended any film course, while 47.0% stated that they have received some form of film-related education: 34.1% have taken a film-related lesson as part of their school or university and 12.9% have taught themselves. Among those who attended film courses, 14.8% attended a course as part of their compulsory curriculum, while 15.5% as a voluntary lesson and 3.8% participated in a film club in their free time.

When examining differences between countries, Belgium (1.1%) and Greece (6.6%) have a significantly lower proportion of young people attending film courses as part of compulsory education compared to other countries. In contrast, Spain (32.0%) reports the highest proportion in this category. Regarding participation in voluntary film courses, Belgium has the highest proportion (30.4%). Although participation in film clubs is not popular among young people, France has the highest proportion (9.0%).

Additionally, self-taught learning in film is most common in Italy (21.1%), Türkiye (19.1%) and Finland (18.7%) while it is least common in Poland (5%). Finally, among those who have not done any film-related courses, Greece (65.1%) and Austria (64.0%) report the highest proportions, whereas Belgium reports the lowest (39.1%). More details are presented in Table 26.

Table 26: Young people attending film courses.

	Yes, (at school or university) as part of compulsory lessons.	Yes, (at school or university) as voluntary lessons.	Yes, at a film club in my free time.	I taught myself.	No, I have not.
Total	14.8	15.5	3.8	12.9	54.5
AU	11.8	10.2	2.2	11.2	64.0
BE	1.1	30.4	0.0	10.6	39.1
FI	15.6	14.2	2.1	18.7	51.7



FR	18.1	10.1	3.4	12.1	56.6
GR	6.6	16.6	9.0	9.0	65.1
IT	10.2	14.6	4.6	21.2	59.3
PO	18.0	19.8	5.6	5.0	48.4
SP	32.0	11.4	1.2	9.8	50.8
TÜ	19.1	14.0	5.2	19.1	51.4

On the topic of film courses, notable age differences are present. School students have attended fewer compulsory (8.3%) and voluntary (9.5%) lessons compared to university students (21.9% compulsory and 21.4% voluntary). Another finding is that a higher proportion of school students (59.7%) have never received film lessons compared to university students (48.8%).

Finally, regarding gender, there is a small difference, as more female respondents (16.6%) have attended a voluntary film lesson than male respondents (13.8%), while more male (16%) than female (10.8%) respondents have taught themselves film-related skills. More information is presented in Table 27.

Table 27: Young people attend film courses in regard to gender and age.

	Yes, at school or university as part of compulsory lessons	Yes, at school or university as voluntary lessons	Yes, at a film club in my free time	I taught myself	No, I have not
school	8.3	9.5	3.5	10.7	59.7
university	21.9	21.4	3.8	13.1	48.8
female	14.8	16.6	3.7	10.8	55.6
male	14.4	13.8	3.7	16.0	53.5
other	22.2	19.0	3.2	25.4	46.0



In addition to film courses, the study examined whether young people attend film events such as film festivals. Most respondents (82.1%) do not attend film events and only a small proportion (14.6%) attended a film event in the past year. A country comparison shows that Poland (24.4%) and Austria (22.2%) have significantly higher participation in film events, while Finland (6.1%) has the lowest. Regarding gender, there are no differences between male and female. However, university students (20.4%) attend film events more often than school students (9.3%). More information is provided in Table 28.

Table 28: Young people attend film-related events (%).

TOTAL	14.6	Countries	
Study level groups		AUSTRIA	22.2
school	9.3	BELGIUM	13.3
university	20.4	FINLAND	6.1
		FRANCE	18.5
Gender		GREECE	11.2
female	15.2	ITALY	13.2
male	14.4	POLAND	24.4
other	28.1	SPAIN	12.5
		TÜRKIYE	16.0

Young people mentioned a variety of film festivals and university film clubs. However, only a few of them were mentioned at least twice, such as Istanbul Film Festival (4), Cannes Film Festival (3), a movie marathon at the university (2), Filmekimi (2) and Boğaziçi University Cinema Club (2).

In summary, nearly half of the participants have received some form of film-related education – whether through compulsory or voluntary courses or by learning themselves – while just over half of the participants indicated that they have not attended any film course. National education systems play an important role in film education: for instance in Spain just over one-third of participants attend compulsory film courses at school and in Belgium almost one-third attend voluntary film courses. More than one tenth of the participants reported teaching themselves film skills, with the share rising to around 20% in countries such as Italy, Türkiye and Finland. These national differences align with results of the *Screening Literacy* research project, which has found that, though there are European



endeavours to harmonise and support film literacy projects, their organisation stays fragmented on national or even regional and local level (Reid, 2018). The different national programmes, policies and culture (Reid, 2018) could affect young people's interest in film and film festivals, which is reflected in film festival attendance. There is little industry data on the age demographics of film festivals that could complement the self-disclosed data collected in this study. Yet, academic research provides several case studies of film festivals with data on age demographics, in which young audiences, in these cases people aged between 18 and 30, are usually well represented (Cudny & Ogórek, 2014; Gunlu & Lale, 2015; Yolal et al., 2019). While this sounds contradictory to the results of our study, these numbers may not be representative outside of their case study context. For example, one factor that may influence whether young people attend film festivals is whether their home city or town hosts any and how far away the nearest one is. Additionally, the low proportion of youth attending film festivals does not need to automatically translate into low shares of young people in film festival audiences.

Moreover, this study explored young people's media production, whether they create videos and share them on social media platforms (Table 30). The results indicate that almost a quarter of participants (23.1%) create videos and share them online. While differences in age and gender are not apparent, differences between countries are noted. Spain (32.1%) and France (37.1%) reported higher proportions than the other participating countries, while Finland (11.2%) and Italy (15.5%) have the lowest proportions.

Table 29: Young people's video production (%).

TOTAL	23.1	Countries	
Study level groups		AUSTRIA	25.7
school	24.3	BELGIUM	24.4
university	23.6	FINLAND	11.2
Gender		FRANCE	37.1
female	23.3	GREECE	20.6
male	21.9	ITALY	15.5



other	23.4	POLAND	25.7
		SPAIN	32.1
		TÜRKIYE	19.8

Additionally, the study examined which kind of content young people produce and the results indicated that 26.8% of young people create fictional content, such as narrative videos, while 22.0% create non-fictional content, such as documentaries, news or educational videos. Non-fictional content is produced more often by men (28.0%) compared to women (18.7%) and by university students (26.0%) compared to school students (16.0%). However, the majority (62.8%) reported creating other kinds of content; examples are presented in Table 30.

There is no statistical difference in video making by gender ($\chi^2(2, N = 4.199) = 0.934, p = 0.627$, SR -0.7 for male, 0.5 for female and 0.1 for other) and age groups ($\chi^2(1, N = 3.881) = 0.239, p < 0.624$, SR -0.3 for adults, and 0.3 for minors). This is not an expected result, as university students might have more time and skills, but the school students appear to be similarly active. However, there were significant relationships between video production and the participant countries ($\chi^2(8, N = 4.387) = 136.588, p < 0.001$).

Table 30: Video content produced by young people.

video content category	number of mentions	video content category	number of mentions
music, concert and singing videos	24	dance videos	12
friends videos	24	videos about photography	11
videos about gaming	22	school/university	9
sport videos	19	nature videos	6
funny videos	16	review videos	5
travel videos	14	car videos	5



The results indicate that almost a quarter of young Europeans are actively engaged with video production and sharing on social media platforms, with notable country differences, as for instance France and Spain have the highest rates. The results align with Rawal (2022, p.248) who found that 14.7% of pre-teens and adolescents in their study post videos and 33.9% post stories in different social media platforms. Among young people, 26.8% produce fictional content and 22.0% create non-fictional content. Non-fictional content is produced more often by men than women and by university students than school students. Fernández-Gómez et al. (2022, p. 9) reported that kid-fluencers on YouTube and Instagram typically produce videos with content in five main formats: scripted stories, challenges, games, vlogs and others.

Moreover, the study explored the devices young people use to create their content. Most participants use their mobile phone (79.2%) for this purpose, while some participants use computers (24.7%), video cameras (23.5%) and a few use tablets (15.2%). The differences between countries are apparent. While Greece (92.3%) and Austria (90.6%) have higher proportions than other countries in video production using mobile phones, Belgium has a significantly low proportion (9.3%). On the other hand, Belgium has the highest proportion (72.2%) in video production using tablets, while Finland has the lowest (3.2%), followed by Türkiye (6.3%) and Austria (6.5%). Regarding computer usage for video production, France (40.7%) and Türkiye (36.5%) have higher proportions, while Finland (11.3%) and Belgium (13.0%) have the lowest compared to other countries. Finally, regarding video production with video cameras, Finland (6.5%) and France (13.6%) present the lowest proportions, while Belgium (55.6%) and Türkiye (34.9%) the highest. More information is available in Table 31.

Table 31: Devices young people use to create their videos (%).

	phone	computer (any kind)	tablet	video camera
TOTAL	79.2	24.7	15.2	23.5
AUSTRIA	90.6	20.1	6.5	20.1
GREECE	92.3	22.1	8.7	18.3
SPAIN	86.8	22.2	10.1	19.6
TÜRKIYE	81.0	36.5	6.3	34.9
BELGIUM	9.3	13.0	72.2	55.6



ITALY	82.9	23.7	15.8	27.6
FRANCE	87.1	40.7	15.0	13.6
FINLAND	87.1	11.3	3.2	6.5
POLAND	84.1	27.1	7.2	22.3

In this respect, there are many differences in terms of gender and study level. Regarding media devices, there is a significant difference in computer use, which is more frequent among university students (32.6%) than school students (16.3%). Also, school students (25.4%) use video cameras more often than school students (20.7%).

Additionally, there are apparent gender differences, as female respondents (85.0%) use mobile phones for video production more often than male ones (65.6%). On the contrary, more male respondents use computers (36.8% versus female 10.8%) and video cameras (30.2% versus female 20.3%). More details are provided in Table 32.

Table 32: Devices young people use for video production by gender and study level (%).

	phone	computer (any kind)	tablet	video camera
school	78.5	16.3	15.3	20.7
university	79.9	32.6	14.5	25.4
female	85.0	18.6	14.5	20.3
male	65.6	36.8	16.8	30.2
other	70.6	23.5	17.6	17.6

In summary, taking differences regarding country, age and gender into account, it can be said that a clear trend is evident in the use of equipment for video production: Adolescents in all countries except one, Belgium, largely use their mobile phones to produce audiovisual content. While female participants stated they use phones for video production more than male and other participants, the mobile phone is the most used device for all genders.



The study also examined where young people share their videos. The most popular platforms are Instagram, TikTok and YouTube, as presented in Table 33.

Table 33: Platforms in which young people share their videos.

platform	number of mentions	platform	number of mentions
Instagram	257	Snapchat	23
TikTok	255	WhatsApp	20
YouTube	127	Twitch	12
Facebook	33	CapCut	10
different platforms	23	Twitter	9

Moreover, the study examined the language, in which young people produce their videos. The most popular language is English, as presented in Table 34.

Table 34: Language in which young people share their videos.

Language	number of mentions	Language	number of mentions
English	157	Polish	16
German	35	Turkish	14
Greek	32	Italian	13
French	31	Chinese	11
no dialogue	27	Russian	11
Dutch	22	Finnish	7
Spanish	17	Ukrainian	7

Most young Europeans share their videos mainly either on Instagram or TikTok, while YouTube is also a popular option. The results align with those of McRoberts et al. (2019, p. 179) that youth as content creators were split between either YouTube or Instagram, Snapchat and TikTok, even



though the present study indicates that within the last few years TikTok and Instagram have become more popular than YouTube, especially regarding video sharing. Another finding regarding the language is that, although the study was conducted in countries where English is not an official language and the participants are not necessarily fluent English speakers, the majority still prefer to produce their videos in English.

The study also explored whether participants who have received any type of film education are more likely to produce videos and films. The results show that film education is significantly related to video and film production. More specifically, there is a statistically significant relation between compulsory film education in both school and university and video making ($\chi^2(1) = 54.868$, $p < .001$, SR 6.0). People who have done voluntary film courses are significantly more likely to make videos than people who have done no film courses ($\chi^2(1) = 5.253$, $p = 0.023$, SR 1.9). Similarly, when people do film courses in a film club, they are significantly more likely to produce videos and films compared to people without film education ($\chi^2(1) = 14.097$, $p < .001$, SR 3.2). Finally, people who reported having taught themselves film are significantly more likely to produce videos and films compared to people without film education ($\chi^2(1) = 25.817$, $p < .001$, SR 4.2).

This section explored whether young people have received film education and whether they produce videos and films. Nearly half of the participants have received some form of film education, while just over half of the participants indicated that they have not attended any film course, which is related to the national educational curricula. The study showed that film education is significantly related to young Europeans' video and filmmaking. More than 10% of the participants reported teaching themselves film skills, rising to around 20% in countries such as Italy, Türkiye and Finland. However, film events such as film festivals are not popular with the participants.

Additionally, almost a quarter of young Europeans are actively engaged with video production and sharing on social media platforms, with notable country differences; France and Spain have the higher rates. A clear trend is evident in the use of equipment for video production, as young Europeans largely use their mobile phone to produce audiovisual content in all studied countries except Belgium. Most young Europeans share their videos mainly either on Instagram or TikTok, while YouTube is also a popular option, and they prefer to produce their content in English.



7 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S NOTIONS OF DIVERSITY AND IDENTITY IN FILM

Today's young people live in a social reality characterised by global cultural flows, the influence of social media on culture and communication, and the movement of people driven by a variety of motives. They have been born into a world that is culturally more diverse than perhaps ever before – a condition often described as “super-diversity” (Vertovec, 2007). In super-diverse societies, different social locations and positions – stemming, for instance, from nationality, ethnicity, religion, language, gender, sexuality, or ability – intersect and intertwine, making diversity complex, multidimensional, and fluid (Vertovec, 2007; Blommaert & Rampton, 2011; Lähdesmäki et al., 2020). Super-diversity inevitably impacts the notion of culture, making it necessary to understand culture as a fluid, inherently plural social construction that is constantly transforming through interactions between diverse people (Otten, 2003; Abdallah-Pretceille, 2006).

Such a social reality impacts on how young people negotiate their identities. Cultural plurality in super-diverse societies helps digital-native young people find peers, groups, and communities with similar interests and cultural habits. Increased plurality has also enhanced the acceptance of differences and the flexibility to simultaneously identify with multiple cultural and social groups. However, while Western societies have become more plural and diverse cultural communities and identities more visible, monoculturalist views and cultural purism have resurged in many social contexts, media, and political debates (Lähdesmäki et al., 2019; Lähdesmäki et al., 2022). Over the past decades, the cultural, media and political landscapes of Western societies have been influenced by populist and extremist movements that incite xenophobic, anti-immigration, misogynist, racist, antisemitic and Islamophobic attitudes and actions. This social reality has also shaped young people's worldviews and values. Many studies (Ozduzen et al., 2023; Lampert & Papadongonas, 2024; van der Brug et al., 2025) note that young people's values are becoming increasingly polarised, with socioeconomic background and gender influencing these divisions. For example, while girls' values have become more liberal, boys are becoming more conservative and more susceptible to radicalising media (Burn-Murdoch, 2024; Kocsis, 2024), often influenced by extremist content on social media (Risius et al., 2024).

In this section, we discuss how young people navigate issues related to diversity and identity in film. The survey addressed such issues with questions focusing on linguistic differences in foreign-



language films, difficulties young people might face when watching films with unfamiliar content and their preferences for film characters similar to or different from themselves. For ethical reasons, the survey did not directly ask about the respondents' identities or views on the above parameters, except for age and gender.

7.1 Foreign Languages

Europe is a continent where inhabitants communicate in numerous languages. While the EU has 24 official languages, the total number of spoken languages on the continent amounts to several hundred. European films reflect this linguistic diversity. Although many films produced in European countries are in a national (most spoken) language or languages, films increasingly include dialogue in multiple languages, reflecting the cultural diversity, migration and movement that characterise contemporary Europe. Moreover, the rise of transnational co-productions further diversifies the languages featured in films. With the expansion of VoD platforms, which offer catalogues including films from around the world, young people can access a broader variety of films than ever before. Consequently, today's young Europeans can watch films that include dialogue in languages that may not be familiar to them.

European countries have different traditions of translating foreign-language films for their audiences (Díaz-Cintas & Remael, 2007; Chaume, 2012; Wikipedia, 2025). These include subtitling, dubbing, and voiceover narration, where the original audio is audible in the background. These traditions vary within countries based on regional translation tradition, the target audience of the film, and the viewing channel. Subtitling is common in Northern Europe (the Nordic countries, Estonia, the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, and Flanders in Belgium), as well as in the Balkan countries and their neighbours, such as Bulgaria, Romania, and Greece. In contrast, dubbing is typical in Central and Southern Europe. Voiceover is used for translating foreign films on television in some Eastern European countries, such as Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and Ukraine. However, children's films, such as animations, are typically dubbed across the continent. In Türkiye, translation practices are mixed, relying primarily on subtitling.

Analysis of the dataset shows that the young people prefer to watch foreign films in a language they do not understand with subtitles instead of dubbed versions (see Table 35). Of the respondents, 55.9% preferred subtitles, while 21.4% preferred dubbing. However, the results vary between the case countries, reflecting their common translation traditions (see Table 36). Age impacts young



people's preferences for watching foreign-language films. Respondents who said they did not want to watch such films were, on average, younger than respondents who were willing to watch them as translated. Additionally, age affects respondents' translation preferences; those who preferred dubbing were younger, on average, than those who preferred subtitles. Furthermore, age affects the respondents' preference for the language of the subtitles. Respondents who preferred subtitles in their native language were younger, on average, than those who preferred subtitles in another language. This may reflect the development of young people's language skills. For example, young people with strong English skills may watch foreign films with English subtitles.

Statistically significant associations emerge when exploring translation preferences between minors (aged 12–17) and adults (aged 18–24). Crosstabulation and the chi-square test confirm these observations. At the 1% significance level ($\chi^2(4, N = 4,278) = 143.750, p < .001$), minors preferred more dubbing and not watching such films at all, while adults preferred subtitles in their native or another language. However, there was no statistically significant association between minors ($SR = 1.9$) and adults ($SR = -1.5$) in their preference for watching unfamiliar foreign-language films without subtitles in their original language.

There are no significant differences in translation preferences between male and female respondents (see Table 35). The only statistically significant association between gender and translation preference occurred when watching unfamiliar foreign-language films without subtitles. This option was less preferred by female respondents ($SR = -2.1$) than by other respondents ($\chi^2(12, N = 4,267) = 39.166, p < .001$). Table 35 shows that non-binary respondents disliked dubbed films more than binary respondents and were more willing to watch films with subtitles in a language other than their native language and films in the original language without subtitles. This aligns with the older mean age of these respondents (19.1). However, these observations are not statistically significant at the 5% level of significance, with SR -values of -1.5 for dubbed films, 1.5 for subtitled films in another language, and 1.5 for films in the original language without subtitles.

Respondents' preferences for watching foreign-language films in their original language with subtitles are impacted by receiving film education (Table 35). Crosstabulation and chi-square tests reveal an association between translation preferences and film education at the 1% level of significance ($\chi^2(4, N = 4,064) = 38.809, p < .001$). This indicates that respondents who received film education through compulsory or voluntary lessons in school, at university level, or through a film club preferred fewer dubbed films ($SR = -3.3$) than their peers who did not receive film education



(SR = 2.2). Furthermore, respondents with film education preferred films in their original language with subtitles in another language (SR = 2.3) and did not prefer films in the original language without subtitles (SR = -2.2). Age may intersect with this background variable, as respondents who received film education tended to be older (mean age: 19.4) than those who did not (mean age: 18.2).

Crosstabulation and chi-square tests revealed an association between translation preferences and frequency of watching films at the 1% level of significance ($\chi^2(20, N = 4,302) = 100.098, p < .001$). Respondents who were the most frequent film watchers (SR = 2.3) and those who said they never watch films (SR = 5.3) preferred dubbing more than their peers did. Furthermore, those who watched films a few times a year (SR = 2.1), rarely (SR = 2.6), or never (SR = 5.7) were more likely than their peers to say that they did not like watching films with an unfamiliar foreign language. This finding shows that regular film watching, which may expose young people to foreign films, increases their likelihood of liking them. However, the respondents who prefer dubbing watch films slightly more frequently than those who prefer subtitles.

Table 35: Preferences for translation of films in a foreign language (not understood by the respondents).

Translation preference	Percentage of respondents preferring the option	Age mean	Female / male / other %	Received film education* / not received film education %	Mean of film watching frequency **
as dubbed into my native language(s)	21.4	17.7	21.7 / 21.7 / 12.5	17.4 / 24.9	2.57
in their original language but with subtitles in my native language	55.9	18.7	56.4 / 55.3 / 56.3	59.1 / 53.6	2.64
in their original language but with subtitles in some other language	17.4	19.1	17.7 / 16.7 / 25.0	20.2 / 15.9	2.65
in their original language without subtitles	3.1	17.7	2.3 / 3.7 / 6.3	1.9 / 3.0	2.70
I do not like	2.2	16.1	1.9 / 2.6 / 0.0	1.4 / 2.6	3.00



watching such films					
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** Received film education at school or university as compulsory or voluntary lessons or at a film club in free time.

* Scale of 1 = every day, 2 = every week, 3 = a few times a month, 4 = a few times a year, 5 = more rarely, 6 = never.

Some previous studies have explored young people's preferences for the translation of foreign-language films. For example, in their comparative study, Soto-Sanfiel et al. (2021, p. 130) noted that young Europeans often have neutral attitudes toward translation practices. Those who preferred dubbing believed that dubbed films were of higher quality. In their study, Italian youngsters had stronger preferences for subtitling than others. This is surprising since dubbing is a common translation practice in Italy. Our study does not support such observation. In our study, crosstabulation and chi-square tests confirmed an association between translation preferences and case countries at the 1% level of significance ($\chi^2(32, N = 4,352) = 788.159, p < .001$). Overall, our results highlight that the dubbing culture in Central and Southern Europe is reflected in the responses (Table 36). Dubbing was most preferred in Spain (SR = 12.3), Italy (SR = 9.3) and Austria (SR = 5.7) and least preferred in Finland (SR = -9.9), Belgium (SR = -7.2), and Greece (SR = -6.6). Conversely, subtitling culture is reflected in the responses: native-language subtitling was most preferred in Türkiye (SR = 4.8), Greece (SR = 4.2) and Finland (SR = 4.2) and least preferred in Austria (SR = -6.3), Spain (SR = -4.5) and Italy (SR = -4.3).

In our study, many respondents surprisingly chose the option of watching unfamiliar foreign-language films "in their original language but with subtitles in some other language". This may indicate a level of understanding of other languages and the ability to watch films subtitled in a language other than the respondents' native language, such as English. This option was chosen most often in Austria, Finland and Greece. Some respondents preferred watching such films without any translation. This option was most often chosen in Poland, France and Belgium. Only a small number of respondents did not prefer films with an unfamiliar foreign language. This option was most often chosen in Belgium, France and Austria.

A comparison of the responses from the case countries reveals that young people generally prefer subtitles to dubbed films, even in countries where dubbing is the dominant practice. Spain was the only country in our dataset in which respondents preferred dubbing. Moreover, only a few



respondents in all countries stated that they do not want to watch films in an unfamiliar foreign language. The findings show that most young people in Europe, including those in Türkiye, are comfortable hearing different languages in films. Multilingual cultural products are part of the social and cultural environment of young people, and linguistic diversity characterises their cultural consumption and everyday life.

Table 36: Preferences for translation (%) of films in a foreign language (not understood by the respondents) in the case countries.

Translation preference	AU	BE	FI	FR	GR	IT	PO	SP	TÜ
as dubbed into my native language(s)	33.2	6.3	2.3	27.1	7.7	40.1	19.6	48.1	10.5
in their original language but with subtitles in my native language	35.0	66.7	69.2	52.9	70.0	42.0	55.2	40.0	74.4
in their original language but with subtitles in some other language	25.9	17.6	24.7	11.3	19.2	12.6	18.3	9.3	13.7
in their original language without subtitles	3.1	4.5	2.3	4.5	1.2	4.3	5.3	1.1	0.5
I do not like watching such films	2.8	4.9	1.6	4.3	1.8	0.9	1.5	1.5	0.8

7.2 Difficulties and Unfamiliarities in Film

Films expose young people to a wide range of themes, stories and worlds, some of which may feel new, unsettling or challenging. As a form of expression, film itself can also present elements that make it difficult to watch. To better understand these challenges, we asked young people a multi-option question: “If you find a film difficult to watch, what could be the reason?” With this, we sought to explore how both unfamiliar aspects of social reality and the expressive features of film shape young people’s viewing experiences and preferences.



It is important to note that unfamiliar cultures, locations, languages, social norms and time periods are common in children's films. Many fantasy, adventure and animated films take place in imaginary realities in which "diversity" exceeds that in the real world. Even children's screen dramas often abandon realism, incorporating fantasy and magical elements (Davies, 2005, p. 393; Hiltunen & Lähdesmäki, 2023). Studies have shown that children and younger teens prefer fantasy films, while older teens prefer more realistic genres (Grodal, 2017, p. 7). Thus, films for teenagers typically focus on topics and challenges in young people's lives in their everyday environments, such as school (Driscoll, 2011, p. 65). While European youth films have adopted various elements from Hollywood teen films (Edney, 2019), they also differ from them.

Our survey findings show (Table 37) that the most common elements that made films difficult for young people to watch were related to the narrative and not to diversity. The most common reasons were an unpreferred topic (51.2%), a too-complicated plot (39.6%) and an unfamiliar film style (28.4%). Elements related to diversity, such as an unfamiliar location (2.6%), unfamiliar culture (9.9%) or unfamiliar language (18.4%), were not considered major obstacles to watching films. Unfamiliar historical periods were rarely seen as problematic (12.0%). However, the results do not indicate whether the respondents watch such films.

Age impacted young people's perceptions of difficulties when watching films. Respondents who mentioned the style of the film as a difficulty were, on average, older than those who chose other response options. This may reflect the genres and types of films that people of different ages watch. As they grow older, the range of films available to them increases, and they start watching more diverse films, including those intended for adults. Inevitably, this means that young people will encounter films made in unfamiliar styles. Respondents who mentioned unfamiliar location and culture as elements that make films difficult to watch were, on average, younger than respondents who chose other options. Besides style, age seems to bring familiarity with diverse locations and cultures, or unfamiliar locations and cultures are no longer considered disturbing. This finding forms an interesting contrast to the genres typically watched by children and younger teens, such as fantasy, adventure and animated films, which are often set in unfamiliar and/or imagined locations and cultures (Davies, 2005; Hiltunen & Lähdesmäki, 2023). However, when watching fantasy and adventure films, viewers expect to encounter strange and imaginary locations and cultures and this may explain why they are not considered disturbing. In general, the question about difficulties in



watching films was more challenging for younger respondents since the mean age was the lowest for the "I don't know" response option compared to the other response options.

Statistically significant associations emerged when exploring the issues that make films difficult for minors (aged 12–17) and adults (aged 18–24) to watch. Crosstabulation and the chi-square test confirm these observations. Minors were more likely than adults to consider unfamiliar culture ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,276) = 14.826, p < .001, SR = 2.9$), unfamiliar dialogue ($\chi^2(2, N = 4,276) = 31.844, p < .001, SR = 4.0$) and a too-complicated plot ($\chi^2(2, N = 4,276) = 13.981, p < .001, SR = 2.2$) as issues that make films difficult to watch. Respectively, adults mentioned style ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,276) = 37.377, p < .001, SR = 3.2$) and the topic of the film ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,276) = 44.251, p < .001, SR = 2.8$) more often. Moreover, minors considered that there was nothing difficult about the films more often than adults ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,276) = 8.244, p = .004, SR = 2.1$). However, they also responded to this question with "I don't know" more often ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,276) = 91.345, p < .001, SR = 7.3$).

Gender impacted young people's difficulties when watching films. The greatest difference was seen in the response to the option of a plot being too complicated, which was agreed with by 44.1% of female respondents and 32.4% of male respondents. This observation is also statistically valid at the 1% level of significance ($\chi^2(6, N = 4,266) = 59.615, p < .001, SR$ for female -4.4 and for male 3.6). Additionally, 26.6% of respondents who identified their gender as other agreed with this option. This group's smaller percentage may be explained by their higher average age. The difference between female and male respondents can be explained in various ways. One possibility is that female respondents want to understand the plot more than male respondents. Another possibility is that male respondents watch films without complicated plots more often, or that they are able to follow complicated plots without seeing them as such. Furthermore, male respondents more often chose the option, "usually, there is nothing difficult in films". This observation is statistically significant at the 1% level ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,266) = 41.305, p < .001, SR$ for female respondents -3.6 and for male, 4.5). This suggests that male respondents were more confident in their views on films. Furthermore, crosstabulation and chi-square tests revealed a few other associations between answer options and gender. Male respondents were more likely to say that an unfamiliar culture made the film difficult ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,266) = 8.831, p = .032, SR = 2.2$), while female respondents were more likely to say that an unfamiliar historical period made the film difficult ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,266) = 22.163, p < .001, SR = 2.7$).

Film education did not have a statistically significant impact on the responses. When comparing the percentages in Table 37, it was found that respondents without a film education were more likely to



consider an unfamiliar culture, location, historical period, language or complicated plot to be elements that make films difficult to watch. Respondents who had received film education more often selected "unfamiliar style" and "unpreferred topic". However, the differences in percentages were small for all response options. The only statistically significant result at the 1% level shows an association between education and the belief that there is nothing difficult in films. Young people without film education considered this less often than their peers with film education ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,064) = 11.051, p < .001, SR = -2.0$). These results suggest that film education has a slight impact on young people's views about issues that challenge film watching, but this impact is difficult to identify through specific components, such as those asked in this question.

The habit of watching films also had a minor impact on the responses. Young people who responded that there is usually nothing difficult in films watched them more regularly, on average, than those who identified some difficulties. Conversely, respondents who answered that the plot was too complicated watched films less regularly, on average, than those who chose other answer options. These observations were also statistically significant at the 1% level. Respondents who watched the most films mentioned complicated plots less often than their peers ($\chi^2(10, N = 4,300) = 28.721, p = .001, SR = -2.8$) and were more likely to believe that there is nothing difficult in films ($\chi^2(5, N = 4,300) = 20.830, p < .001, SR = 2.7$). Thus, active film watching seems to decrease difficulties in watching films in general and following plots in particular. Interestingly, respondents who found unfamiliar locations difficult were as regular consumers of films as those who did not find anything difficult about films. However, the mean levels of film watching frequency were rather close for all response options (2.53–2.70).

The young people surveyed had written 414 open responses to this question, including various reasons why films are difficult to watch. These answers included the film being boring or too slow (both mentioned in 54 responses), unpreferred acting (mentioned in 16 responses), and actors/actresses (mentioned in 13 responses).

Table 37: Reasons for difficulties with watching a film.



Reason for difficulty	% of respondents choosing the option	Age mean	% of female / male / other	% of respondents received film education* / not received film education	Mean of film watching frequency**
It tells about a culture unfamiliar to me	9.9	17.7	9.1 / 11.7 / 6.3	8.9 / 10.1	2.69
The story is located in a place unfamiliar to me	2.6	17.6	2.4 / 2.8 / 1.6	2.0 / 2.6	2.53
The story happens in a historical period unfamiliar to me	12.0	18.7	13.8 / 9.1 / 6.3	11.4 / 12.1	2.67
It includes dialogue in a language unfamiliar to me	18.4	17.8	18.5 / 18.3 / 10.9	16.1 / 19.5	2.64
The plot is too complicated	39.6	18.2	44.1 / 32.4 / 26.6	38.4 / 40.5	2.70
The style of the film is unfamiliar to me	28.4	19.0	29.3 / 27.4 / 25.0	29.0 / 28.2	2.66
The topic is such that I don't want to watch it	51.2	18.8	51.9 / 50.0 / 54.7	53.1 / 50.9	2.63
Usually there is nothing difficult in films	16.4	18.1	13.7 / 21.3 / 21.9	16.7 / 14.9	2.53
I don't know	6.3	16.5	5.0 / 8.1 / 6.3	5.0 / 6.2	2.63

** Received film education at school or university as compulsory or voluntary lessons or at a film club in free time.

* Scale of 1 = every day, 2 = every week, 3 = a few times a month, 4 = a few times a year, 5 = more rarely, 6 = never.

A comparison of the case country datasets reveals statistically significant differences in young people's views on the difficulties of viewing films (Table 38). For example, the French dataset mentioned unfamiliar culture ($\chi^2(8, N = 4,345) = 86.491, p < .001, SR = 7.4$), location (no significance at 5% level), historical period ($\chi^2(8, N = 4,345) = 122.838, p < .001, SR = 8.1$), language ($\chi^2(16, N = 4,345) = 205.960, p < .001, SR = 9.2$) and film style ($\chi^2(8, N = 4,345) = 558.962, p < .001, SR = 12.4$) more often than other countries did. This is an interesting result considering the respondents' backgrounds: the French respondents mentioned more often that they lived in another country (see section 2). These respondents may perceive various unfamiliar elements in films commonly



exhibited in France, including domestic, European, and Hollywood films. On the other hand, this result may reflect the strong national film industry and culture in France. France is one of the largest film industries in Europe, actively producing domestic films for French audiences, while films from other countries are less seen and may display unfamiliar things.

In the Turkish dataset, respondents considered the plot complicated much less often than in other countries ($\chi^2(16, N = 4,345) = 137.734, p < .001, SR = -4.9$). They also more often answered that there is usually nothing difficult in films ($\chi^2(8, N = 4,345) = 31.908, p < .001, SR = 2.4$). However, these results may be impacted by the different data collection method compared to other case countries. In Türkiye, the survey was not conducted in classrooms, but rather, researchers reached young people and their parents via their personal networks.

The biggest difference between the national datasets was in the selection of an unfamiliar film style, ranging from 13.2% of respondents choosing this option in Italy to 62.0% in France. It appears that young people in different countries have very different perceptions of film styles and their impact on film viewing experiences. A deeper understanding of these differences would require further study.

Table 38: Reasons for difficulties (%) with watching a film in case countries.

Reason for difficulty	AU	BE	FI	FR	GR	IT	PO	SP	TÜ
It tells about a culture unfamiliar to me	8.8	11.8	5.8	21.6	7.6	7.0	11.8	9.9	7.2
The story is located in a place unfamiliar to me	3.3	2.1	3.0	4.1	1.8	3.2	1.7	2.5	1.4
The story happens in a historical period unfamiliar to me	9.8	13.0	16.3	26.2	7.6	7.7	13.5	8.0	6.9
It includes dialogue in a language unfamiliar to me	27.1	25.5	16.1	38.3	13.7	11.5	21.1	12.8	5.8
The plot is too complicated	45.6	53.0	47.6	33.7	40.4	29.0	38.9	38.5	23.1
The style of the film is unfamiliar to me	25.2	16.6	53.6	62.0	16.7	13.2	16.8	28.0	28.6



The topic is such that I don't want to watch it	45.6	39.3	58.8	65.6	71.6	49.5	74.5	0.0*	57.2
Usually there is nothing difficult in films	13.1	19.3	15.9	12.3	15.5	17.1	13.0	21.2	21.7
I don't know	9.4	9.9	4.7	1.3	6.4	6.4	7.4	5.8	3.8

* This option was not included in the Spanish questionnaire.

7.3 Preferences for Film Characters

It is important to note that young people are able to relate the events in films to their own lives. Therefore, film characters are extremely important to them. Film characters provide a point of identification and help young viewers reflect on their own lives and anticipate the future. Film characters exemplify different ways of living and being in the world. They can serve as role models but also as cautionary tales. Young people aged 12 to 24 are a diverse group, comprising children, teenagers and young adults, so the significance of film characters differs greatly for them. The youngest in the group may still watch children's films, while slightly older participants may watch youth films. Most likely all of them also watch films for all ages. Thus they are exposed to a wide variety of film characters.

To explore the types of characters that young people like in films and how these preferences reflect today's diverse social reality, the survey included a question with multiple options depicting various character traits, particularly in comparison to the respondents (Table 39). The most frequently selected reasons for liking a film were "where the main characters come from different backgrounds" (45.0%) and "where the main characters are children / young people like me" (37.8%). These answers reflect different perspectives on the diversity of characters in films. The first option highlights that respondents value diversity, while the second option emphasises respondents' preference for characters similar to them – at least in terms of age. Although these responses may appear to be opposite, they are not mutually exclusive. In fact, 19.3% of respondents chose both options.

In addition to the option of "children/young people like me", 22.5% of respondents preferred films in which "the main characters are like my family and friends". Either of these two or both options were selected by 60.3% of respondents, highlighting young people's preference for films with characters that resemble them and/or their loved ones. In addition to the option of "characters from different



backgrounds", 27.8% of respondents preferred films in which "the main characters tell stories about different countries". These two options (either or both) were chosen by 72.8% of respondents, indicating that most of the surveyed young people prefer films with diverse characters. This observation aligns with the least popular answer to this question: films "where there are no characters with disabilities", which 6.7% of respondents chose. Thus, the results indicate that young people prefer characters who are both diverse and similar to themselves. The response options included "other" chosen by 19.0% of respondents, with a field for entering free text. The answers to the open question were diverse and ranged from "characters I can identify with" and "characters from sexual minorities" to "movies where the characters have complex personalities".

Several differences emerged in the views of male and female respondents regarding their preferred film characters. In general, female respondents mentioned preferring films with all of the above-discussed characters more often than male ones. The most statistically significant gender difference concerned the option "where the main characters are children/young people like me" ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,227) = 163.687, p < .001$), which was mentioned much more frequently by female (45.0% choosing this option, $SR = 6.1$) than by male (24.8%, $SR = -7.9$) and non-binary individuals (28.6%, $SR < 1.96$). Women (25.2%, $SR = 2.8$) also indicated more often than men (18.6%, $SR = -3.1$) and non-binary individuals (17.5%, $SR < 1.96$) that they preferred the main characters to resemble their family and friends ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,227) = 30.425, p < .001$). Non-binary respondents emphasised their preference for diverse characters. These respondents preferred films with characters from different backgrounds (58.7%, $SR < 1.96$), films with characters telling stories about different countries (42.9%, $SR = 2.3$), and films with disabled characters (27.0%, $SR = 4.9$) more than binary respondents (46.2%, $SR < 1.96$; 29.6%, $SR < 1.96$; and 9.3%, $SR < 1.96$ for female and 41.9%, $SR < 1.96$; 24.0%, $SR = -2.7$; and 6.2% for male, $SR = -3.1$).

Additionally, male respondents chose the option "none of the above" more often than other genders ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,226) = 46.607, p < .001, SR = 5.0$). In response to the open-ended question, male respondents mentioned various preferences, such as characters that are "charismatic", "multidimensional", and who "develop within the movie". However, the most frequently repeated open response emphasised that other aspects of a film are more important than specific character traits. Non-binary respondents chose the option "other" much more often than other genders in this question ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,241) = 22.106, p < .001, SR = 3.5$). Of those who answered the open question, nine were non-binary respondents who most often mentioned characters belonging to gender and sexual minorities.



Respondents' gender also impacted their preferences regarding the gender of film characters. Crosstabulation and chi-square tests revealed a strong statistical association between character preferences and gender. Female respondents were more likely than male respondents to consider it important that the main character be the same gender as them ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,227) = 14.510, p = .002$). Specifically, 16.7% (SR < 1.96) of female respondents considered it important, compared to 13.2% (SR = -2.3) of male respondents. This finding contradicts previous research (Hoffner, 1996) according to which identification with characters of the same gender is more common among young men. Hoffner (1996, p. 334) explains this by the greater variety of roles available to men in films, and the fact that women are more likely to identify with men because they engage in more male-specific activities than vice versa.

The more specific question about preferences for characters' gender indicates that the same gender is also important for male respondents in our data. When asked directly about young people's preferences for male and female characters, the results indicate that male respondents are likely to prefer films with male characters ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,227) = 44.222, p < .001$, SR for male 4.8 and for female -3.6), while female respondents prefer films with female characters ($\chi^2(3, N = 4,227) = 114.860, p < .001$, SR for female 5.7 and for male -7.7). However, 74.1% of respondents did not choose either option. Furthermore, among the respondents who provided answers to these gender-related questions, 31.3% selected both liking male and female characters.

In our study, age impacted the respondents' preferences for film characters (Table 39). Those who most frequently chose the option "where the main characters tell stories about different countries" were the oldest, followed by those who liked films with disabled characters or characters from different backgrounds. Those who most frequently chose the option "where there are no characters with disabilities" were the youngest. These results suggest that age may increase the preference for diversity of characters in films.

These observations are confirmed by crosstabulation and chi-square tests comparing character preferences between minors and adults. There is a statistically significant positive association between minors and the answer option of film characters being children or young people like themselves ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,238) = 34.477, p < .001$, SR = 3.6), as well as with films in which there are no characters with disabilities ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,238) = 99.027, p < .001$, SR = 7.6). There is also a statistically significant positive association between adults and answer options of film characters



coming from different backgrounds ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,238) = 62.670, p < .001, SR = 3.6$) and characters telling stories about other countries ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,238) = 86.995, p < .001, SR = 4.9$). The results show that younger teenagers prefer characters who are similar to themselves, while young adults value a greater diversity of characters in films. Additionally, age significantly impacted young people's preferences for the gender of film characters. Crosstabulation and chi-square tests indicate that minors answered more often than adults that they liked films with male characters ($SR = 6.9$ vs $SR = -5.4$, respectively; $\chi^2(1, N = 4,238) = 90.183, p < .001$).

Besides age, film education influences young people's preferences for film characters (Table 39). The greatest difference in percentage of answers was between those who had received film education at school, university, or a film club, and those who had not, concerning the options "other" (23.5% vs 9.2%), "where the main characters come from different backgrounds" (48.7% vs 41.5%) and "where the main characters tell stories about different countries" (33.0% vs 26.1%). Those who had received film education chose these options more often. These results suggest that film education enhances young people's ability to recognise different aspects of film, particularly those related to diversity.

Crosstabulation and chi-square tests provide more nuanced insights into the statistical relationship between film education and character preferences. Young people who received film education were more likely to say that they liked characters who reminded them of their family and friends ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,028) = 15.257, p < .001, SR = 2.9$), were the same gender as them ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,028) = 15.235, p < .001, SR = 3.0$), who come from different backgrounds ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,028) = 12.153, p < .001, SR = 2.2$) and tell stories about different countries ($\chi^2(1, N = 4,028) = 21.507, p < .001, SR = 3.3$). These results highlight that film education teaches young people to appreciate both the similarities and differences between film characters.

There were no notable differences when comparing the frequency of the answer options to the frequency with which respondents watched films. Interestingly, the only statistically significant association between these variables is regarding the gender of the film character. Respondents who selected "male characters" as their preference watched films more frequently (daily) than those who selected other answer options ($\chi^2(5, N = 4,262) = 19.999, p < .001, SR = 3.0$).



Table 39: Reasons for liking films.

Reason for liking a film	% of participants choosing the option	Age mean	% of female/male/other	% of respondents received film education/ not received film education	Mean of film watching frequency
Where the main characters are children/young people like me	37.8	18.0	45.0/24.8/28.6	37.7/38.5	2.60
Where the main characters are like my family and friends	22.5	18.5	25.2/18.6/17.5	26.4/21.0	2.58
Where the main characters come from different backgrounds	45.0	18.8	46.2/41.9/58.7	48.7/41.5	2.61
Where the main characters tell stories about different countries	27.8	19.3	29.6/24.0/42.9	33.0/26.1	2.57
Where the main characters have the same gender as me	15.6	18.5	16.7/13.2/27.0	19.0/14.0	2.64
Where the main character is a boy/man	15.2	17.2	12.6/20.3/14.3	14.8/ 15.1	2.56
Where the main character is a girl/woman	18.9	18.4	23.8/10.0/19.0	20.8/17.9	2.59
Where characters with disabilities are included	8.7	18.9	9.3/6.2/27.0	10.1/7.8	2.64



Where there are no characters with disabilities	6.7	16.5	4.4/10.3/12.7	5.5/6.7	2.62
None of the above	19.0	18.7	16.2/24.9/12.7	16.6/20.2	2.70
Other	9.7	18.5	8.8/10.5/23.4	23.5/9.2	2.64

When survey responses to this question were compared across the case countries, differences emerged (Table 40). Crosstabulation and chi-square tests revealed a statistically significant association at the 1% level for each answer option ($p < .001$). The answer options highlighting the similarity between film characters and the respondents and their family and friends was most often chosen in Spain (SR = 5.3 and 3.8) and least often chosen in Türkiye (SR = -2.6 and -2.1). Conversely, answers emphasising characters' diversity – those from different backgrounds and telling stories about different countries – were more frequently selected in Finland (SR = 5.5 and 7.1) least frequently in Spain (SR = -5.2 for the first option) and Belgium (SR = -4.6 for the latter option). This is an interesting result, as the Finnish urban centre was probably the least multicultural area included in the study. These results could indicate that young people in less multicultural environments are more interested in seeing multicultural diversity in films than young people who live in such environments.

For respondents in France (SR = 5.2) and Finland (SR = 4.1), the same-gender film character was the most important, while for respondents in Italy (SR = -4.3), it was the least important. Additionally, Finnish respondents more frequently chose films with male (SR = 3.6) and female (SR = 5.0) characters than their peers in other countries, while these options were least chosen in Türkiye (SR = -5.6 and -4.4). However, the Finnish responses to the question may not necessarily indicate polarised gender preferences, as 80.7% of respondents who answered that they prefer male characters also answered that they prefer female characters. Similarly, 60.6% of respondents who answered that they prefer female characters also answered that they prefer male characters. Finnish respondents also most often liked films that include (SR = 6.0) and do not include characters with disabilities (SR = 4.8). This may again reflect polarised views among Finnish respondents. However, 29.7% of Finnish respondents who answered that they prefer films with characters with disabilities also answered that they prefer films without such characters. Additionally, 40.3% of those who answered that they prefer films without characters with disabilities also answered that they prefer



films with such characters. It should be noted that the percentages of many options are higher among Finnish respondents than among their peers in other countries, indicating that they chose more alternatives.

In general, the responses highlight that young people chose multiple options for this question that one might consider contradictory. This observation may indicate that young people enjoy various types of films, regardless of the characteristics of the characters. It may also suggest that young people had difficulty answering the question about film characters because many other factors influence film preference.

Table 40: Reasons for preferring films (%) in case countries.

Reason for liking a film	AU	BE	FI	FR	GR	IT	PO	SP	TÜ
Where the main characters are children/young people like me	34.5	36.7	40.9	39.5	41.4	27.7	36.0	52.6	29.1
Where the main characters are like my family and friends	21.2	18.5	26.7	29.4	20.1	18.1	20.8	30.6	17.1
Where the main characters come from different backgrounds	34.3	36.5	60.5	47.3	48.9	40.9	52.8	29.0	55.9
Where the main characters tell stories about different countries	26.2	16.8	43.6	32.9	27.8	28.4	23.8	27.3	19.8
Where the main characters have the same gender as me	14.7	15.4	22.4	26.1	14.2	8.3	15.0	12.8	12.6
Where the main character is a boy/man	14.9	17.6	21.2	9.4	19.3	9.2	21.3	14.7	3.3
Where the main character is a girl/woman	19.2	15.8	28.1	15.4	15.4	15.3	24.2	22.6	8.4
Where characters with disabilities are included	6.7	5.4	16.2	7.6	11.4	9.0	9.9	6.4	2.4



Where there are no characters with disabilities	6.5	9.3	11.9	2.3	4.9	2.8	11.2	6.4	1.5
None of the above	24.3	26.8	13.2	5.1	19.3	24.3	16.8	15.7	26.1

8 LOCAL VS GLOBAL: THE BATTLE FOR MINDS AND MONEY

This section explores young people's conceptions of cinema, particularly European cinema, by looking at how they rate films from different countries and which countries they think the best European films come from. The aim is to find out the ways in which young people today evaluate European cinema in relation to US and global cinema and how they evaluate films from different European countries. The section builds on previous research on the hegemony of the US film industry. Based on the empirical data, it confirms this domination, but also challenges it by noting the recognition of Asian and other non-European or non-US film industries among European children and young people.

Research has shown that people prefer media produced by cultures that are similar to their own. This behaviour has been explained by the theory of cultural proximity (Pastina & Straubhaar, 2005; Soto-Sanfiel et al., 2018, pp. 719–720). As Pastina & Straubhaar (2005, p. 273) note, cultural proximity is based to a large degree on language, but it is a multilayered phenomenon affected also by spatial and cultural forces. Although film tastes vary by country, nation should not be used as the only factor that affects cultural consumption (Soto-Sanfiel et al., 2021, p. 123). Gender, heritage, religion and definitions of humour among other things may affect preferences (Pastina & Straubhaar, 2005, pp. 272–274). Our study cannot claim to reveal such complex reasons behind the film and film country preferences of young people, but we pay attention to linguistic and cultural proximity.

Previous research on young European audiences has produced somewhat contrasting results on cultural complexity, confirming that it is a complex issue. Although cultural proximity seems to explain young people's film preferences in many ways, it has been shown that "greater cultural distance produces more enjoyment, identification with the characters, credibility of the stories and intensity of certain emotions" (Soto-Sanfiel et al., 2018, p. 720). A Danish study revealed that in teenagers' opinion Danish films and series are too close to the reality in which they live and therefore lack fascination and an element of surprise (Will & Agency, 2023, p. 84). This suggests that film



preferences are not always, or mainly, explained by cultural proximity – at least not by spatial proximity.

US productions have dominated cinema programmes for decades and have recently taken over streaming platforms too. Therefore, it can be argued that US films have become culturally proximate: their conventions are so well-known that they have become the norm (Jensen & Mitric, 2023, p. 156). This situation most likely has a homogenising effect on people's tastes.

The findings of this survey, as well as some earlier studies (Flodin et al., 2024; Soto-Sanfiel et al., 2018a, pp. 732–733), suggest that young people do watch films from other European countries even though their biggest favourites are US films (Table 41). Earlier studies also hint that they might watch more European films, if they had more information about them, that is, if European films were more visible in social media, for example, and if they were better available for viewing. One may also consider the impact of sociality on the choice of films. Such issues were not explored in this study, but sociality and the formation of “situational taste communities” is offered as one explanation by Jensen and Bengesser (2025), who analysed the results of two Danish studies.

In our survey, the respondents were asked to rate how much they like films from the following countries on a scale of 1 (I don't like it) to 5 (I like it a lot): Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Japan, Poland, Spain, Türkiye, the UK and the US (Table 41). In addition to the countries participating in the survey, Germany and the UK were added, because there are in the five biggest European film-producing countries. For comparison, Japan and the US were also taken as options. The respondents could also add a country that was not mentioned under the option “Other” and rate it.

Table 41: Countries of origin of films in order of preference.

Country	Mean of preference
US	4.37
UK	4.05
Italy	3.49
Spain	3.43
France	3.39



Japan	3.20
Germany	3.07
Greece	2.97
Poland	2.77
Belgium	2.76
Finland	2.74
Austria	2.59
Türkiye	2.58

Respondents from all countries liked US films the most (4.37), while UK films were the second most popular (4.05). These were the only countries to receive a grade higher than 4. Italian films came third (3.49) with Spain (3.43) and France (3.39) coming close behind. The worst performers in the comparison were films from Türkiye (2.58), Austria (2.59), Finland (2.74) and Belgium (2.76). The fact that Türkiye had the smallest number of respondents probably explains the lowest position of Turkish cinema.

Films from the US were liked the most by Belgians (4.53) and the second most by Spaniards (4.51). Films from another English-speaking country, the UK, were also liked the most by Belgians (4.32) and the second most by the Greeks (4.18). US and UK films were both the least liked by the French (4.21 and 3.47).

In general, domestic films were relatively well liked. The average grade for domestic films was 3.48. Italians liked films from their own country the most (3.84), with Spaniards coming second (3.77), and Poles third (3.65). Austrians liked films from their own country the least (2.98) with Finns taking the second place (3.26) and French the third place (3.35).

In our study, films were commonly liked the most (i.e. received the best grades) in their production country. France and Austria were the exceptions. French films received higher scores from five other countries than from France. Austrian films were rated higher in Türkiye (3.10) and Poland (3.03) than in Austria (2.59). The answers to the first question of the survey also revealed that young people watch European films and especially recent films from their own countries. Based on this question



we cannot agree with Soto-Sanfiel et al. (2018, p. 737), who claim that European youth not only prefer American films to European films, but have a negative attitude towards the films of their own countries.

German and Japanese films received the highest score from Türkiye (3.47 and 3.66). German films received the lowest grade from France (2.11) and Japanese films from Greece (2.82). In general, the French gave the lowest ratings to films from other countries, the average grade being 2.48. In comparison, on the other end of the spectrum, the Turkish respondents gave the average grade 3.49 and Polish respondents, 3.40. The French gave the lowest rating to films from all other countries, except France and Japan (for which they gave the second lowest rating). They gave the lowest grade to Finland (1.69) and the highest to the US (4.21). France was also the only country to give several countries (4) a mean that was below 2.

The option “Other” was chosen a total of 402 times. By far the most often mentioned other country was South Korea with 134 mentions. The next most cited countries were Sweden (42), China (20), Russia (18), Iran (18), Mexico (16), Holland (15) and Norway (14). The other countries were not always rated, but South Korean films were typically given the rating 4 or 5. The high popularity of South Korean cinema is probably explained by its recent successes, such as the film *Parasite* (*Gisaengchung*, 2019) and the television series *Squid Game* (*Ojing-eo geim*, 2021–2025).

When exploring the potential impact of linguistic and cultural proximity, it was found that Austrians gave the second highest grade to German films (3.40) and Turks the highest (3.47). Belgians did not rate French films high despite linguistic proximity, because their rating, 2.98, was the lowest of all participating countries. However, it should be noted that the Belgian data was collected from Dutch-speaking urban centres. The French gave an even lower grade, 1.87, to Belgian films. Finns gave a higher rating to Japanese films than to films from European countries. In the option “other” Finns mentioned Sweden 24 times and South Korea 17 times.

Table 42: Mean preferences for films on a scale from 1 (I don't like) to 5 (I like a lot) from selected countries.

Films from a country	Total	AU	BE	FI	FR	GR	IT	PO	SP	TÜ



Austria	2.59	2.98	2.10	2.72	1.72	2.17	2.11	3.03	2.42	3.10
Belgium	2.76	2.72	3.50	2.63	1.87	2.20	2.25	2.88	2.39	3.02
Finland	2.74	2.86	2.10	3.26	1.69	2.26	2.22	3.01	2.61	3.11
France	3.39	3.56	2.98	3.38	3.35	3.39	3.25	3.67	3.31	3.82
Germany	3.07	3.40	2.69	3.24	2.11	2.81	2.98	3.21	3.23	3.47
Greece	2.97	2.99	2.36	2.68	2.04	3.48	2.67	3.13	2.92	3.10
Italy	3.49	3.55	3.16	3.32	2.44	3.49	3.84	3.74	3.62	3.77
Japan	3.20	3.33	2.97	3.46	2.83	2.82	3.27	3.40	3.08	3.66
Poland	2.77	2.81	2.06	2.75	1.93	1.95	2.35	3.65	2.50	2.99
Spain	3.43	3.61	3.24	3.24	2.49	3.62	3.34	3.66	3.77	3.50
Türkiye	2.58	2.99	2.38	2.33	2.11	2.20	2.16	2.40	2.27	3.52
The UK	4.05	4.02	4.32	4.08	3.47	4.18	3.95	4.10	4.14	4.10
The US	4.37	4.24	4.53	4.32	4.21	4.47	4.39	4.31	4.51	4.26

To find out more about young people's preferences for European cinema, the survey asked which European country respondents thought the best European films come from (Table 43). This was an open question, with 3,445 responses (78.4%), but respondents could also choose the option "I don't know". 948 respondents (21.6%) chose this option. Additionally, there were approximately 1,200 blank answers or answers saying "I don't know" to the open question, which is more than a third of the total responses. Clearly, the question was difficult. The wording of the question was slightly ambiguous, with many respondents mentioning non-European countries such as the US, India and Japan, although the question was intended to focus on European countries. They seemed to understand the question in the following way: Which country do you think the best films one can watch in Europe come from?, or simply: Which country in the world produces the best films?

If the US is not counted, the top five were Europe's biggest film-producing countries, the UK (1,228), France (969), Spain (561), Italy (529) and Germany (228). Poland (145), Belgium (83) and Greece (61) came next. The fact that there were respondents from Poland, Belgium and Greece likely



contributed to the relatively high number of mentions for these countries. After Sweden (54), Finland (48), Japan (44) and Türkiye (38) were the next most frequently cited countries, and here also the participation of Finland and Türkiye in the survey probably explains the relatively high number of mentions for these countries.

The answers to this question are in line with answers to the first two questions asking about the most recently watched and favourite films. The *Harry Potter* films co-produced with the UK and the US were the most popular, and the most often mentioned European films were French, Italian and Spanish.

Table 43: The countries that respondents think Europe's best films come from.

Ranking	Country	Number of mentions
1.	United Kingdom/Great Britain/England	1,228
2.	France	969
3.	Spain	561
4.	Italy	529
5.	USA/America	394
6.	Germany	228
7.	Poland	145
8.	Belgium	83
9.	Greece	61
10.	Sweden	54

A comparison of results from questions 5 (ratings for films from listed countries) and 6 (open question on where Europe's best films come from) shows that young people rate films from Europe's five biggest film countries as the best if non-European countries are excluded. The UK is in first place in both rankings, with Spain third and Germany fifth. Italy came second in question 5 and fourth in question 6, Spain the other way round. The answers also reveal that often young people are not very aware of where the films they watch come from.



The young people in our study are familiar with film and socialised in film watching culture. They know what they like and make their choices accordingly. They are increasingly film consumers making independent decisions about how to spend money on films. The KIDS Regio study (Flodin et al., 2024, p. 97) noted that children aged 7–11 are in a "dynamic and transformative" period of their lives. During this time, they become familiar with available audiovisual content and learn about national and global cultural trends and phenomena targeted at them in commercialised and commodified cultural flows. The teenage years are crucial for young people's development as consumers of films, as well as creators of audiovisual content. At this age, young people need to become familiar with European films beyond their home country and be encouraged to express their views through film, as positive experiences with both may influence their future cultural behaviour.

It is important to take such encouragement seriously if we seek to promote the growth of European film as an art form and an industry. Recent figures on the competition between the European and the US film industries underscore this challenge. Over the past decade, approximately two-thirds of films released in the EU were European, yet only one-third of ticket sales were for European films. Meanwhile, US productions accounted for one-fifth of releases and two-thirds of ticket sales (see Cabrera Blázquez et al., 2023, p. 49; Lähdesmäki & Hiltunen, forthcoming). At the same time the number of films produced in Europe has steadily increased (Baschiera & Di Chiara 2018, p. 248; Crusafon, 2015, p. 88), prompting the question who is watching them. From the perspective of the European and US film industries, young people in Europe are a valuable audience segment that deserves special attention and promotional tactics that acknowledge that the media landscape in which young people navigate has changed for good.

9 CONCLUSIONS

9.1 Summary of Results

This study explored the ways in which young people engage with the EFI and cinema in general, across three themes: film preferences, film watching habits and creative practices in film and video production. Based on an extensive survey conducted in nine EU countries, the aim was to understand the role of young people in the EFI within their everyday cultural and social environments and against the background of a cinema scene that is impacted by globalisation, diversification,



digitalisation and the polarisation of values and worldviews. This concluding section summarises the key results, observations and findings.

Our study examined the impact of not just country, but gender, film viewing frequency and film education on genre preference. It explored more widely the range of aspects that young people consider important but challenging in their film watching experience and whether they have preferences as to the geographical and linguistic make-up of films. Our study provides more detailed information on how young people rate and compare films from different countries. Few of the previous studies have asked young people to mention films they like. The Danish study Reaching Young Audience (Jensen & Mitric, 2023) and KIDS Regio's study (Flodin et al., 2024) asked about favourite films and the Danish one also provides a list of the top ten films.

KIDS Regio compared data from 12 European countries, and concluded that across Europe there are more similarities than differences in film preferences and viewing habits (Flodin et al., 2024). The study acknowledged that countries have different cinema cultures: dubbing is preferred in some countries and subtitles in others, and films are watched through different preferred media.

Existing literature on young people as video and film creators highlights that EU countries have many programmes which foster young people's engagement with film production, however there are country disparities in the opportunities provided (Sarikakis et al., forthcoming). During the Covid-19 lockdowns, young people posted more audiovisual content on social media (Revealing Reality, 2020), but this diminished after the pandemic (Revealing Reality, 2023).

Our findings underline the important role that films have in young people's lives as the majority watches films weekly or a few times monthly and almost one tenth even watch films daily. The study also underlined the important role that cinema has in young people's lives as most of participants go to the cinema monthly or every couple of months. Young people prefer watching films at home using VoD services, followed by the cinema and lastly by television. This can be explained by the reduced variety of television channels and the high prices in cinemas. When asked whether they are pleased with the existing film options on different media channels, most young Europeans reported being satisfied with the variety of films available on streaming services. Almost half of the participants expressed satisfaction with the variety of films available in cinemas. In contrast, only about a quarter were satisfied with the variety of films available on television channels. Regarding what influences young Europeans' film selection, the most popular is recommendations from family



and friends, followed by social media and trailers. Most young people stated that they watched films alone, followed by watching films with friends and family.

We asked the young people about their most recently watched and favourite films as well as their preferred genres. For the most popular films, the results were similar across countries. US productions dominated the combined top 15 list for all countries, as well as the national top ten lists. Despite US dominance, the single most popular film, or film series, was the UK-produced *Harry Potter*. The second most popular film in the national lists was the US-produced *Interstellar*. As regards recently seen films, opinions were more dispersed and individual films received fewer mentions. Compared to favourite films, the number of European films was higher on both the combined top 15 list and the national top ten lists of recently seen films. In France and Italy, young people watched more European films than in other countries surveyed. In both these countries, seven European films were on their top ten lists of recently seen films, including five domestic films. It seems that young people do watch European, especially recent domestic, films, but when asked to choose their favourite films, they mention mainly US films. A striking feature of the favourite films is that half of them were released ten years ago. Another noticeable feature is that many of the films belong to a popular film series, such as *Star Wars*, *The Lord of the Rings* and *The Hunger Games*. New Zealand and Japan were the only film countries beyond the US and Europe that made it onto these lists.

Film preferences were further explored by asking the respondents to choose their favourite genres. Comedy, action, drama, romance and adventure were the five most preferred genres. Comedy was the most popular genre in all nine countries with the highest preference in Spain and the lowest preference in Italy. This observation was also statistically significant. While the popularity of comedy is not surprising in itself, interestingly there were very few comedies in the lists of the most popular films. The five most popular genres were included in the top ten of all countries. Across countries, there was agreement on the least popular genre, which was Western. Musical, war, anime and documentary were also among the least preferred genres. In addition, some statistically significant differences between countries emerged, for example for romance and action. Respondents from Spain were the biggest fans of romance while the genre was the least liked by respondents from Poland. Spanish respondents' preference for romance has been noted earlier by Soto-Sanfiel et al. (2021, p. 129). Action films were the most popular in Greece and the least preferred in Poland. Despite some national differences, it was quite clear which genres are the most popular and which are out of favour among young people at the time of the survey.



Genre preferences were also cross-analysed with age, gender, film education and film watching frequency. It was found that adult respondents prefer a wider range of genres than younger respondents. The difference was biggest regarding horror, which was preferred by the younger respondents. Adults had a greater preference for documentaries, historical films and dramas. The study showed that genre preferences are a strongly gendered phenomenon, confirming the findings of previous studies. The differences were the strongest regarding war, Western and sci-fi, which male respondents preferred more, and romance, musical and drama, which female respondents preferred more than the other genders. Those who identified as non-binary showed greater preference for anime, thriller and sci-fi than those identifying as binary.

The study shows that film education broadens the taste in genres. Those respondents who had received some form of film education preferred drama and animation more than those who had not. The difference was statistically significant. Film watching frequency and genre preferences were connected too, but no clear patterns were detected.

The analysis of “important things” (elements) in films revealed that young people consider topics the most important thing. It is followed by narratives, emotions, actors/actresses and soundtrack. The finding is similar to previous research that placed emphasis on characters, which were not included as an option in this survey. Interestingly, young people consider actors/actresses much more important than filmmakers, which they considered the least important of the options. It is possible to interpret this finding as indicating that the characters that the actors and actresses play are important, particularly as objects of identification. However, the importance of filmmakers was shown to increase with age. Those who had received film education and watched films the most frequently showed greater appreciation for filmmakers. Gender differences were also statistically significant. Emotions and actors/actresses were much more important for female than male respondents whereas special effects and filmmakers were more important for male respondents. There were also many differences between countries, but it was difficult to discern clear patterns. The fact that some genres, such as science fiction, were not very popular, even though films in those genres ranked high on the list of most popular films, may be a sign that today's young people think differently about genres or that genres have become less important to them.

The study further explored whether young people have attended any film courses. Film courses could be in any form, including school or university courses, in compulsory education on both



compulsory and voluntary courses, or in other forms, such as self-taught or film clubs. The findings report that just over half of the participants have not attended any film course and almost half of them have received some form of film education. In this topic there are significant national differences, depending mostly on whether film education is part of the national curriculum, whether compulsory or voluntary. For instance, in Spain 43.4% of participants have received film education at their school or university, and in Poland 37.8%, while in contrast, in Austria 22% and Greece 23.2% have received film education in school or university. Likewise, there are national differences in whether young people have taught themselves film-related topics – for instance only 5% in Poland and 21.3% in Italy. There are significant differences between study levels, as university students have received film education more often than school students.

Moreover, the study explored whether young Europeans are themselves the creators of videos and films. Almost a quarter of the participants are actively engaged in producing and sharing videos and films. Although there are no apparent study level or gender differences, many national differences appear with France reaching up to 37.1% and Spain up to 32.1%, while on the contrary, in Finland film production is 11.2%. However, commonalities appear in the way young Europeans produce films, as for instance the majority uses smartphones, except young people in Belgium who use tablets. Young people tend to share the content they produce on online platforms, mostly on Instagram and TikTok, and they prefer producing them in English.

As a form of cultural expression, films enable young people to explore diversity and negotiate identities, whether their own or those of others. This study examined these topics by looking at linguistic differences in foreign-language films, the difficulty of watching films with unfamiliar content and preferences for film characters that are similar to or different from oneself. The analysis of young people's views on films with unfamiliar foreign languages reflects different translation practices in the case countries, where dubbing is commonly used in Central and Southern Europe, and subtitling is used in Northern and Southeastern Europe. However, the results indicate that, even in countries where dubbing is common, young people prefer subtitles to dubbing. Spain was the only country in our study where dubbing was preferred, and even there, the difference in preference was small. The analysis showed that young people are open to foreign-language films, even if the language is unfamiliar to them. The findings also show that familiarity with films, increased by frequent viewing, education and age, impacts young people's preference for films with dialogue in an unfamiliar language.



The analysis revealed that the most common elements that made films difficult for young people to watch stemmed from the films' narrative dimensions rather than from diversity. However, minors were more likely than adults to consider unfamiliar culture and language as potential sources of difficulty. Frequency of film watching and film education had a minor impact on young people's perceptions: increased frequency decreased difficulties with watching films in general and following plots in particular. In addition, gender had an impact on perceptions. The findings show that male respondents perceived fewer difficulties in films than female ones, who much more often perceived a complicated plot as the reason why a film may be difficult to watch. This may indicate that female respondents watch more films with complicated plots or that male respondents are generally more confident in their film watching skills.

The analysis of film characters highlights the duality in young people's views. On the one hand, most young people preferred characters with different backgrounds to their own who told stories about other countries. On the other hand, they emphasised liking characters similar to themselves, their families, and their friends. These two preferences are not exclusive, however. The similarity dimension was most important for female respondents, while the diversity dimension was emphasised most by non-binary young people. Additionally, minors preferred characters similar to themselves, whereas young adults preferred greater diversity in film characters. The emphasis on these two dimensions varied greatly between the case countries. Spanish young people emphasised the similarity aspect the most, while Finns emphasised the diversity aspect the most. This seems directly opposed to the level of multicultural diversity in these countries. Preferences for film characters' gender aligned with young people's gender: male respondents were more likely to prefer male characters, and female respondents were more likely to prefer female characters. The analysis shows that film education enhances young people's ability to recognise different aspects of film, particularly those related to diversity.

Geographical preferences for films were explored through two questions that asked the respondents to rate films from a list of 12 countries and to tell which country they think Europe's best films come from. The first question (question 5) included the option "other". The second (question 6) was an open question and included the option "I don't know". Respondents from all nine countries gave the best rating to US films and the second best to films from the UK. Italy, Spain and France received the next best ratings, but the difference between the UK and Italy was clear. The results indicate that the UK is the only European film-producing country that has some chance of competing with



US films, and that the big film-producing countries are the most popular, with the exception of Germany that came seventh after Japan.

The analysis shows that domestic films are generally liked. Respondents from Italy gave the best grade to domestic films and respondents from Spain gave them the second best. With two exceptions, France and Austria, films were given the best grade in their “home” countries. France, Europe’s biggest film-producing country, stood out with French respondents giving the lowest ratings to films from other countries. As a possible example of the impact of cultural and linguistic proximity, Türkiye gave Germany the highest score and Austria the second highest. South Korea received by far the most mentions in the response option “other”. Japan was also rated higher than several smaller European film-producing countries.

Respondents were asked to name the country that produces the best European films and answered that they come from the UK. The next in the ranking were France, Spain and Italy, that is, the same countries as before, but in a different order. However, over a third of the respondents (1,200) answered “I don’t know” or left the answer blank. In addition, almost four hundred answers mentioned “the US”. This shows that the question was difficult and that young people do not have a clear conception of European cinema. It may also indicate that they often do not know where the films they watch come from. This was, in fact, mentioned several times in answers to the open questions. Some also admitted that they do not care where the films they watch come from. This finding, while not surprising, is nevertheless interesting, because it shows that a large proportion of young Europeans are not familiar with, or interested in, European cinema.

Our findings confirm the findings of previous studies which have shown that European youth watch mainly US films. Virtually the only European production to have attracted the interest of European youth on a large scale in recent years is the British *Harry Potter* film series. On the positive side, however, there were a lot of domestic films among recently watched films. This suggests that young people do not dislike domestic cinema, which is a hopeful sign. But clearly, a lot needs to be done to make European cinema more visible and attractive to young people. The interesting stories are there already, but their existence must be communicated to the youth in an effective way.



9.2 Limitations of the Study

This study was based on a comprehensive international survey of young people. Such a research design inevitably faces many challenges. As discussed in section 2, many partners encountered difficulties in conducting the survey with secondary school pupils, as schools were unable or unwilling to accommodate researchers due to numerous similar research requests or inflexible study schedules. In the case of Türkiye, researchers were not permitted to gather any survey data in schools. Consequently, the national datasets were not gathered in a completely identical manner in all case countries. To address this limitation, the researchers sought to include a diverse range of participants in the survey to represent young people in the urban centres as accurately as possible.

The questionnaire was prepared in English and translated into the national languages used in secondary school and university education in the urban centres of the case countries. The researchers sought to ensure that the meaning of the words was identical to that of the original English words in their translations. However, it is possible that valid translations have slightly different connotations in different languages, social contexts and cultures. Furthermore, the survey included questions about terms or abstract concepts, such as film genres or factors that make films difficult, which may be unfamiliar to young people. The survey does not indicate how respondents understood these terms or abstract issues.

The survey included 23 questions, many of which had multiple answer options. Many young people may have found the survey challenging because they skipped questions towards the end. However, we have included incomplete questionnaires in our analysis if they contain valid data on the topics covered in this report. The high number of respondents compensates for the missing answers. In some countries, the researchers were present and helped the youngest respondents, in order to counter any difficulties in answering the questions. However, the researchers were careful not to influence young people's views and opinions in any way.

In several multiple-choice questions, the respondents could choose as many options as they wanted. It appears that in some countries respondents have chosen more options than in others, which may undermine the reliability of the results. It may be questioned whether the results would have been more accurate if the number of response options had been limited, for example in the question on genre preferences and in the question on reasons for liking a film.



9.3 Suggestions for Further Research

Although scholars have become increasingly interested in the engagement of children and young people with film, and their active role as agents within the film industry, our research revealed various gaps and weaknesses in the current body of research on film and young people. We suggest further research on the following topics:

- Young people's views, perceptions and experiences of film festivals. Previous research into young people's attendance at film festivals is almost non-existent. Further research is needed to gain an in-depth understanding.
- Data on young people's engagement with and role in the film industry, which often lacks information on young people.
- In-depth, longitudinal studies exploring the impact of film consumption on young people's growth and the development of their values and worldviews. These are lacking in previous research.
- Young people's education in video and filmmaking production.

10 POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Analysing the survey data and reflecting on previous literature and today's cultural, social and film education contexts 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.

European policymakers

- 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 programme. They could also support streaming platforms that prioritise European content for youth.
- 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.

National policymakers

- 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.
- Every European country should have a national film education plan. According to this programme, 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.

Film industry professionals

- 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.

Educators and professionals working with young people

- 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.
- More efficient, more participatory, and pedagogically inspiring film education is needed 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.



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APPENDIX 1

The survey template in English.

Survey on young people's film preferences in Europe

You are invited to participate in a survey on your film preferences. This survey is part of the REBOOT project, funded by the European Union. The project explores the ways in which European films could gain new audiences. This survey is conducted in 9 European countries among young people aged 12–24, in order to find out what kinds of films they watch and like the most. Responses will be used as data in a research report provided to the European Commission and in scholarly publications.

Participation in the survey is voluntary, and it takes approximately 20 minutes to answer the questions. The survey is completely anonymous. Please do not write to open question any information from which you can be identified. The researchers will manage your responses carefully. The survey responses from all 9 countries will be published as a joint dataset on the internet after ensuring that no one can be recognised from the data. Your answers are important for our research!

You may familiarise yourself more in detail with the aims of the survey and the uses of your responses in the research [link to research notification and privacy notice]. Please give your consent to the use of your responses in the above-described research by clicking this box:

- I give my consent to use my responses in this research and to publish my anonymous responses in a database.

If you have questions about the survey, please contact: [write here the name of the contact person of your team.]

Please answer all questions. If you do not know how to answer an open question, you may answer 'I don't know'. Under "other", you can write your own answer option.

Film preferences

1. What was the most recent film you saw (no matter where you saw it)? If you know the film's director and the production country, please write them here.
2. What are your three most favourite films? Please write the names of the films.
3. What kind of films do you like? You can choose multiple options.
 1. comedy
 2. horror



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3. drama
4. adventure
5. action
6. crime
7. romance
8. sci-fi
9. fantasy
10. thriller
11. war
12. historical
13. musical
14. Western
15. documentary
16. animation
17. anime
18. other: _____

4. What things are important for you in films? You can choose multiple options.

1. topics/themes
2. narratives/stories
3. emotions
4. diversity of characters
5. filmmakers
6. actors/actresses
7. costumes
8. special effects
9. soundtrack
10. location
11. nothing in particular
12. other: _____

Geographical preferences

5. How much do you like watching films from the following countries? If you miss some countries here, you can write it yourself under 'other'. On a scale from 1 to 5 please indicate how you like the films, 1 being (I don't like it) and 5 (I like it very much).

1 / 2 / 3 / 4 / 5 / I don't know

1. Austria
2. Belgium
3. Finland
4. France
5. Germany
6. Greece
7. Italy
8. Japan
9. Poland



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10. Spain
11. Türkiye
12. The UK
13. The US
14. Other

6. Which country do you think Europe's best films come from? Please write the name of the country or countries here.

1. Mention the country / countries:
2. I don't know

Linguistic and cultural preferences

7. When watching films in which people speak languages you do not understand, how do you prefer to watch them? Choose **one** option.

1. as dubbed into my native language(s)
2. in their original language but with subtitles in my native language
3. in their original language but with subtitles in some other language
4. in their original language without subtitles
5. I do not like watching such films

8. If you find a film difficult to watch, what could be the reason? You can choose multiple options.

1. It tells about a culture unfamiliar to me.
2. The story is located in a place unfamiliar to me.
3. The story happens in a historical period unfamiliar to me.
4. It includes dialogue in a language unfamiliar to me.
5. The plot is too complicated.
6. The style of the film is unfamiliar to me.
7. The topic is such that I don't want to watch it.
8. Usually there is nothing difficult in films.
9. I don't know.
10. Other: ____

9. I prefer films: You can choose multiple options.

1. Where the main characters are children/young people like me
2. Where the main characters are like my family and friends
3. Where the main characters come from different backgrounds
4. Where the main characters tell stories about different countries
5. Where the main characters have the same gender as me
6. Where the main character is a boy/man
7. Where the main character is a girl/woman
8. Where characters with disabilities are included
9. Where there are no characters with disabilities
10. None of the above
11. Other: ____



Viewing habits

10. a) How do you usually watch films?

1 Never, 2 Rarely, 3 Sometimes, 4 Often, 5 Mainly, 6 I don't know

1. cinema
2. television channels
3. video on demand/streaming service on television
4. video on demand on computer
5. video on demand on tablet
6. video on demand on phone
7. other: _____

10.b) Which streaming service/Video on Demand service/platform do you use the most?

11. How often do you usually watch films? Choose **one** option that is the most typical for you.

1. every day
2. every week
3. a few times a month
4. a few times a year
5. more rarely
6. never

12. With whom do you **usually** watch films? Choose **the most typical** option(s) for you.

1. friends
2. family
3. boyfriend/girlfriend/partner
4. alone
5. other: _____

13. Based on which kinds of information do you choose a film? You can choose multiple options.

1. recommendation from a friend or family
2. recommendation in social media
3. film review
4. film poster
5. trailer
6. commercials on television
7. I don't choose a film based on any particular information
8. other: _____

14. How satisfied are you with the variety of films offered ...

1 very dissatisfied / 2 dissatisfied / 3 not dissatisfied or satisfied / 4 satisfied / 5 very satisfied / 6 I don't know

1. in local cinemas
2. in television channels
3. in streaming services



15. How often do you visit a cinema?

1. weekly
2. monthly
3. every couple of months
4. yearly
5. never

16. a) Do you create videos yourself (on social media or elsewhere)?

1. yes
2. no

16. b) If yes: you can choose multiple options.

1. Yes, I create fictional content (such as films or narrative videos)
2. Yes, I create non-fictional content (such as documentaries, news, or educational videos)
3. Yes, I create other content
4. Tell us more about your content

16. c) If yes: Which devices do you use to create your content (mobile phone, cameras, etc.)? You can choose multiple options.

1. phone
2. computer (any kind)
3. tablet
4. video camera
5. other: _____

16. d) If yes: Where (in which platforms, social media or other) do you share your content? Please do not reveal your account names.

16. e) If yes: in which language are your videos?

17. Have you attended any event dedicated to films during the past year, such as a film festival in your city or similar?

1. yes (please tell us a little more about it)
2. no

Background questions

18. What is your gender?

1. male
2. female
3. other



4. I don't want to say

19. How old are you?

1. 12
2. 13
3. 14
4. 15
5. 16
6. 17
7. 18
8. 19
9. 20
10. 21
11. 22
12. 23
13. 24

20. In which country do you live?

1. Austria
2. Belgium
3. Finland
4. France
5. Greece
6. Italy
7. Poland
8. Spain
9. Türkiye
10. Other: _____

21. Where do you study now?

1. lower secondary school
2. upper secondary school or high school
3. university

22. Have you received lessons on films? You can choose multiple options.

1. Yes, (at school or university) as part of compulsory lessons.
2. Yes, (at school or university) as voluntary lessons.
3. Yes, at a film club in my free time.
4. I taught myself.
5. No, I have not.
6. I don't know.
7. Other: _____

23. If you want to add something, please write it here.



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Send your responses by clicking the button.

Thank you for participating in the study!

[Optional:] If you want to participate in the lottery of ten movie tickets, please send your name and phone number or email address to us: [each partner's email address here]



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Disclaimer

This document is part of the outputs of the *Reviving, Boosting, Optimising and Transforming European Film Competitiveness - REBOOT* project, which received funding from the Horizon Europe programme of the European Union under the Grant Agreement No. 101094769.

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Citation

Please cite this report as follows:

Hiltunen, K., Lähdesmäki, T., Sarikakis, K., Chatziefrimidou, A., & Haslauer, S. (2025). *Report on young people's preferences*. Developed by the Horizon Europe project REBOOT (Reviving, Boosting, Optimising and Transforming European Film Competitiveness – REBOOT), funded by the European Union's Horizon Europe Research and Innovation programme under Grant Agreement No. 101094769.

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17466239>

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



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