

Eurimages is the Council of Europe fund for the co-production, distribution and exhibition of European cinematographic works. Set up in 1989 as a Partial Agreement, it has 33 member states as at 31 December 2008.

A few key dates

The total support granted by the Fund amounted to €21 787 000, divided up as follows:

- co-production support: €20 200 000, i.e. 92.72% of the total
- distribution support: € 854 000, i.e. 3.92% of the total
- theatre support: € 665 000, i.e. 3.05% of the total
- digitisation support: € 68 000, i.e. 0.31% of the total

In 2008, *Eurimages* supported:

- 57 European co-productions, representing a selection rate of 50% of eligible projects;
- 149 distribution support requests*, representing a selection rate of 85.63% of eligible projects;
- 40 theatres* which are part of the *Eurimages/Europa Cinémas* network;
- 8 *Eurimages* co-productions received digitisation support.

Numerous distinctions

A large number of prizes were awarded to *Eurimages*-supported films in 2008, such as:

- ✓ 3 films were prize winners at the *Cannes Film Festival*:
 - 'Three Monkeys' by Nuri Bilge Ceylan (Turkey), Turkish/French/Italian co-production: award for Best Director;
 - 'Il Divo' by Paolo Sorrentino (Italy), Italian/French co-production: Jury prize;
 - 'Lorna's Silence' by Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne (Belgium), Belgian/French/Italian co-production: Best screenplay.
- ✓ 'Yumurta' (Egg) by Semih Kaplanoglu (Turkey), Turkish/Greek co-production, received the first prize at the *Istanbul International Film Festival* and more than twenty prizes at various other festivals.
- ✓ 'Pandora's Box' by Yesim Ustaoglu (Turkey), Turkish/French/Belgian/German co-production, received the Golden Shell for Best Film at the *San Sebastian Film Festival*.
- ✓ 'Tie tähtiin' (Niko and the way to the Stars) by Michael Hegner (Denmark) and Juusonen Kari (Finland), children's film, Finnish/German/Danish/Irish co-production, received the "Cinekid Lion" prize as well as the audience award at the "Cinekid" Children's Film Festival in Amsterdam.

* Countries concerned by this programme: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, "The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia", Turkey.

✓ 'Back Soon' de Solveig Anspach (Iceland/France), Icelandic/French co-production, received the "Golden Giralillo Award" at the *Seville Film Festival*.

Such clear recognition of *Eurimages*-supported films at festivals consolidates the Fund's importance in its unique role as a support fund for European co-productions, reflecting the diversity and the richness of Europe's cultural identity, which constitutes the very essence of European cinematography.

Eurimages prizes and awards

In 2008, *Eurimages* continued its visibility strategy by awarding prizes and collaborating with certain festivals, in particular:

- by again awarding the "*Eurimages prize*" at the European Film Academy's annual awards. This prize is designed to reward and encourage European co-production via the co-producers. Thus, in December 2008, *Vibeke Windeløv* (Denmark) and *Bettina Brokemper* (Germany) were awarded the *Eurimages* statuette;
- by associating itself with the Council of Europe's "*FACE prize*", created as part of an annual cooperation arrangement between the *Istanbul International Film Festival* and the *Council of Europe*. The prize is awarded to the film or documentary which best furthers public awareness of human rights issues. In 2008, it was awarded to *Li Yang* (China) for his film *Mang Shan /Blind Mountain*;
- by continuing its well-established collaboration with the event "*Etoiles et Toiles du cinema européen*", organised by the Odyssee Cinema in Strasbourg, and with the *Seville Festival* and the *MedFilm Festival* in Rome, which have special sections, and prizes, for films supported by *Eurimages*.

The Fund's Presidency

In October 2008, the Board of Management re-elected its current president, *Jacques Toubon*, for an exceptional fourth one-year mandate (*until the end of 2009*). It also elected in advance its future President, *Jobst Plog*, for a first two-year mandate from *20 November 2009 until 19 November 2011*.

A new Executive Director

Roberto Olla was appointed to the post of *Executive Director of the Eurimages Fund*, succeeding *Jan Vandierendonck*. He took up his duties on *1 July 2008*.

2009 at a glance

At the end of 2008, the *Eurimages* Board adopted several measures, which came into force at the beginning of 2009, in order to improve the management of the Fund and the selection of applications. In particular, the Board incorporated an analysis of the screenplay by independent experts into the procedure for selecting projects, and reduced the number of annual meetings to 4 (instead of 5). The Board also made it compulsory for all supported co-production projects with budgets higher than 3 million euros to set up a collection account. Finally, the digitisation support regulations were revised to meet the producers' needs more closely.