

EURIMAGES STRATEGY

FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN THE EUROPEAN FILM INDUSTRY

Foreword

According to the [Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017](#), achieving gender equality is central to the protection of human rights, the functioning of democracy, respect for the rule of law and economic growth and sustainability.

The figures available to us today show that there are very few women in key posts in the film industry and film creation.

A study conducted by the European Audiovisual Observatory, which was published in 2014, reveals that only 16.3% of European films made between 2003 and 2012 were directed by women and that this percentage has not changed significantly over the last five years. In the case of co-production projects applying for support from Eurimages, the proportion of women directors is slightly higher (19% of eligible projects in the last three years), but remains very low nonetheless.

While the percentages vary depending on the role performed, this under-representation of women is the rule in virtually all the film-related occupations.

At the same time, awareness seems to have grown in recent years, and both the press and the major festivals have taken an interest in the subject. However, this awakening will not suffice to bring about a significant improvement. It is therefore essential that proactive solutions be proposed to redress this gender imbalance and achieve a widespread and lasting improvement in the situation.

The issue here is the added value that greater gender equality in European film-making could bring to cultural diversity. The aim is to facilitate women's access to key posts in the film industry and film creation, so as to enable them to give expression to their talents, viewpoints and authenticity.

Introduction

The Council of Europe Gender Equality Strategy 2014-2017, which was adopted by the Committee of Ministers at its 1183rd meeting on 6 November 2013, is the most emblematic expression of the member States' commitment and testifies to their determination to advance the gender equality agenda as part of the efforts to uphold the principles of democracy and human rights.

The strategy's overall goal is to achieve the advancement and participation of women and bring about real gender equality in Council of Europe member States through activities based on five strategic objectives:

1. combating gender stereotypes and sexism;
2. preventing and combating violence against women;
3. guaranteeing women's equal access to justice;
4. achieving the balanced participation of women and men in political and public decision-making;
5. achieving gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures.

The action being taken by Eurimages is directly in line with this last objective of "achieving gender mainstreaming in all policies and measures", which specifically concerns Partial Agreements. However, film is a powerful tool that can also be used to combat gender stereotypes and sexism and to prevent and combat violence against women.

I – Strategy

With this strategy, Eurimages undertakes to incorporate, or reinforce, the gender equality perspective in all its policies and measures.

The Eurimages strategy is based on:

- the experience gained, studies produced and data collection system implemented (Appendix 1) by Eurimages,
- the conclusions of the conference held in Sarajevo on 14 August 2015,
- co-operation with the Council of Europe and its Gender Equality Commission,
- co-operation with professional and institutional bodies and NGOs working in this area.

It sets out Eurimages' aims and priorities for the promotion of gender equality in European cinema and specifies the working methods and principal partners as well as the measures needed to ensure visibility in terms of results.

It has a dual purpose: taking action within Eurimages and encouraging the relevant national bodies to do likewise. It also aims to involve and mobilise civil society organisations active in the film sector, building on their experience and knowledge. Lastly, it seeks to lay the foundations for fruitful co-operation with all the stakeholders, institutions, NGOs and other associations working to bring about gender equality.

It proposes specific action in critical areas, key measures aimed at promoting change and making progress. These are set out in a two-year **action plan** (for the period 2016/2017, see **Appendix 2**).

The strategy also determines the methods for monitoring and assessing the process, in order to measure progress achieved, based on a **list of indicators**, as shown in **Appendix 1**.

II – Strategic goal and objectives

General goal

The strategy's overall goal is to reduce gender inequality in the film industry and film creation and to promote the role of women before and behind the camera. To achieve this goal, Eurimages will endeavour in particular to:

- assess gender gaps and analyse the causes of and factors behind the marginalisation of women in film-related occupations;
- develop and apply appropriate measures to alert the authorities concerned to the need to improve the gender balance in key posts in the profession;
- raise film-makers' awareness of the issue of the portrayal of women on screen;
- foster greater prominence and more recognition for works by women;
- closely monitor equality measures introduced in member states to promote the advancement of women in the film industry, assess progress made and communicate and disseminate good practices

The measures to be taken and actions to be implemented will be based on the following three strategic objectives.

1) Mainstream a gender equality approach in all policies and measures

This mainstreaming approach involves taking account of the “gender” dimension in all processes, including financial processes. Eurimages will carry out an assessment of its processes with the aim of incorporating the gender equality perspective in all areas and at all levels.

Eurimages will in particular seek to improve gender equality in the allocation of support and will set up a system for monitoring and assessing the amounts granted to co-production projects.

Eurimages will also help to promote this gender mainstreaming approach among the Fund's member States by ensuring the visibility of its actions and strategy, gathering and distributing information on developments in the situation in Europe and communicating and disseminating good practices.

2) Combat gender stereotypes and sexism

Stereotypes are preconceived ideas that arbitrarily assign women and men specific roles determined and limited by their gender. Stereotypes can impede the development of the natural talents and abilities of girls and boys.

Recent studies, especially those carried out by the Geena Davis Institute and Vivendi,¹ condemn the existence of numerous stereotypes in the way women are portrayed in films: *“in artistic content, women are too often presented as objects of male desire above everything else. Therefore the image of women is degraded and even sometimes degrading [...]. (A)s artists, women seem stuck in specific roles; muses or performers. They are not the ones who create but always exist thanks to a male creator ...”*.

These studies also condemn the potentially harmful consequences of this image of women, since the cinema has a powerful influence in generating and perpetuating unconscious prejudices.

Eurimages will endeavour to make film-makers aware of this problem and will envisage concrete measures that make it possible to promote a non-stereotyped image of men and women. Eurimages will also endeavour to highlight women’s successes.

For the implementation of these actions, Eurimages will be able to rely on the work carried out by the Council of Europe’s Gender Equality Commission (GEC) and use the tools developed by the GEC for these matters.

¹ **Study by the Geena Davis Institute on female characters in 120 popular international films across 11 countries.** This study reveals deep-seated discrimination, omnipresent clichés and stereotypes with regard to women and girls in the 120 films studied. The female characters seldom have a job and even more rarely hold positions of responsibility. By contrast, hypersexualisation concerns women more than men, with girls and women twice as likely as boys and men to be shown in sexually revealing clothing or partially or fully naked.

In November 2013 Vivendi and the Equality Lab published the initial results of a study on “Women in music and cinema in Europe”.

3) Prevent and combat violence against women

This strategic objective refers to the Istanbul Convention, “Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence”.

This convention foresees, in its article 17, the “Participation of the private sector and the **media**”, in these terms: “Parties shall encourage the private sector, the information and communication technology sector and the media, **with due respect for freedom of expression and their independence**, to participate in the elaboration and implementation of policies and to set guidelines and self-regulatory standards to prevent violence against women and to enhance respect for their dignity”.

Violence against women is still widespread in the Fund’s member states. Showing a degraded image of women in films, all too often submissive women or women turned into sexual objects, can only encourage this violence.

Eurimages will ensure that co-production projects in receipt of its support do not encourage violence. It will endeavour to raise film-makers' awareness of this *problem*.

III - Implementation – Communication

This strategy will be implemented under the responsibility of the Eurimages Board of Management by the “**Gender Equality Working Group**”, which is at the heart of this initiative.

This working group will ensure that the rules and principles laid down in the strategy are applied and that the Board of Management's decisions in matters of gender equality are acted upon.

It will submit a programme of activities to the Board of Management for approval, along with any related budget estimate, as well as an activity report and an assessment of the results.

It will also submit to the Board of Management a communication plan with the aim of ensuring the visibility of the strategy among institutions, professionals and civil society and will propose measures to raise film-makers' awareness of the need to comply with the principles and objectives laid down in the Eurimages strategy for gender equality in the European film industry.

IV – Partnerships

Several national funds or institutes have adopted gender equality strategies and action plans and a number of professional associations have been set up to defend and promote the role of women in the film industry.

This provides a sound basis for the establishment of partnerships or institutionalised co-operation enabling the identification of opportunities for joint action, complementarity and synergy.

Eurimages will endeavour to work with other national or regional organisations and will also strive to involve and mobilise civil society organisations, building on their experience and specialist knowledge.

APPENDIX I – DESCRIPTION OF THE DATA COLLECTION SYSTEM, LIST OF MONITORING INDICATORS AND LIST OF RESULTS

1. Data collection system

Since early 2014 Eurimages has had a comprehensive data collection system that enables the gender of co-production projects and screenplays to be determined. Since 2013 film production budget data have also been entered in the Coeurimages database. These budgets are also analysed from a “gender” standpoint.

a) The “gender of a co-production project”

The project gender is determined using information (man/woman) supplied by producers on a sheet forming part of the application form and listing the main job roles in each film production project for which an application for Eurimages support is made.

The total number of men and women participating in each project makes it possible to determine whether a project is **female** (60% or more of the job roles are held by women), **male** (60% or more are held by men) or **balanced** (when the distribution of the roles among men and women is between **40 and 60%**).

NB: The vast majority of eligible projects in 2014 were male (nearly 80%), whereas the proportion of female projects was less than 5%.

Gender	Projects	Percentages
Female	8	4,7%
Male	134	78,8%
Parity	28	16,5%
Total	170	100,0%

An analysis of project gender by film type shows that female projects are more numerous in the case of **documentaries (13.33%)** and **animation films (25%)**, whereas in the case of **fiction** they make up only **3.31%** of eligible projects.

An overall analysis of these data makes it possible to calculate women's presence in each job role for all the projects submitted to Eurimages. The analysis below shows that, for the **151 eligible fiction projects** received in 2014, women's participation stood at **28%** for **production**, **21%** for **direction** and **25%** for all job roles.

GENDER OF ELIGIBLE PROJECTS 2014	NUMBER OF MEN		NUMBER OF WOMEN		TOTAL
	Total	% Men	Total	% Women	Men & Women
Volume of projects	151		151		151
Total producers	259	71,55%	103	28,45%	362
Director	119	78,81%	32	21,19%	151
Scriptwriter	114	75,50%	37	24,50%	151
1st role	92	61,33%	58	38,67%	150
2nd role	91	63,19%	53	36,81%	144
3rd role	76	60,32%	50	39,68%	126
Cameraman/Image	136	90,07%	15	9,93%	151
Editor	89	61,81%	55	38,19%	144
Researcher	0	0,00%	1	100,00%	1
Composer	110	93,22%	8	6,78%	118
Sound engineer	140	97,22%	4	2,78%	144
Total artistic&technical list	967	75,55%	313	24,45%	1280
Totals	1226	74,67%	416	25,33%	1642

NB: If all eligible projects (fiction, documentaries and animation) are considered, the overall results are almost identical: taking all the roles together, the proportion of women involved is 26%, compared with 74% for men.

b) The “gender of a screenplay”

The gender of the screenplay is analysed using the **Bechdel test**. This test is applied only to fiction projects and under its female and male variants.

A work of fiction passes the Bechdel test (3 points) if the following three statements are true:

- female*: the work contains at least two identifiable and named female characters – 1 point –
these two women talk to each other – 1 point –
they talk about something other than a man – 1 point;
- male*: the same questions applied to men.

The test results for the 151 fiction project applications received in 2014 were as follows:²

² Half points indicate differences between the script readers and show that, although clear instructions have been given to them, some degree of subjectivity subsists in the answers to the Bechdel test.

Bechdel test		Female			Male		
Fiction projects 2014		Val	%	Cumul	Val	%	Cumul
Average readers A and B	0	10	6,6%	6,6%	1	0,7%	0,7%
	0,5	4	2,6%	9,2%	1	0,7%	1,4%
	1	37	24,5%	33,7%	7	4,6%	6,0%
	1,5	5	3,4%	37,1%	1	0,7%	6,7%
	2	13	8,6%	45,7%	12	7,9%	14,6%
	2,5	11	7,3%	53,0%	6	3,9%	18,5%
	3	71	47,0%	100,0%	123	81,5%	100,0%
Total		151	100,0%		151	100,0%	

NB: 47% of fiction projects passed the female test (3 points) compared with 81.5% for the male test.

The figures show that men are much more present in fiction films than women and that they are given a more active and diversified role.

By cross-tabulating the two sets of data (Bechdel test and project gender), the following results are obtained:

Bechdel test	Female and parity projects Female test	Female and parity projects Male test	Male projects Female test	Male projects Male test	Total
0 - 0,5	3,4%	0%	11%	1,6%	5,3%
1 - 1,5	10%	13,8%	32%	3,3%	16,6%
2 - 2,5	17,2%	20,7%	16%	9,8%	13,9%
3	69%	65,5%	42%	85,2%	64,2%

NB: 69% of the female and balanced projects pass the female Bechdel test, compared with 42% for the male projects. Male projects obtain the best score for the male test (85.2%). However, the female and balanced projects also have a high score for the male test (65.5%).

These figures show that female characters are more present and more active in female projects than in male projects. They also show that male characters have a more important role in

female projects (86.20% of projects obtain at least 2 points), whereas in male projects the female characters who obtain at least 2 points make up only 58%.

c) Co-production budgets

In 2013 and 2014 film production budget data were entered in the Cœurimages database on the basis of a predefined budgetary framework, so as to permit comparisons.

Budgets of 250 **eligible fiction film** projects, analysed according to the director's gender:

FICTION PROJECTS	Total projets	Male projects	Female projects	Mixed projects
No. of films	250	200	48	2
%	100%	80,0%	19,2%	0,8%
Average budget	3 440 273 €	3 571 735 €	2 945 896 €	2 218 908€
Minimum budget	435 454 €	435 454 €	585 503 €	2 120 000 €
Median budget	2 366 756 €	2 450 700 €	2 128 336 €	
Maximum budget	20 364 770 €	20 364 770 €	10 539 918 €	2 317 817 €

NB: The percentage of projects directed by women is 19%. The gap between the average budgets of films directed by men and the average budgets of films directed by women is significant (1.21 times higher).

The same analysis applied only to **projects supported** shows a larger gap (1.57) in favour of "male" films, and the percentage of women directors falls to **18%**.

2 Monitoring indicators and results

a) Indicators measuring the degree of gender equality (applied to all eligible projects):

- Project gender: number and percentage of women and men per project,
- Selection rate (female projects and male projects),
- Support rate (female projects and male projects),
- Film budgets (female projects and male projects),
- Support granted (female projects and male projects), in amounts and as a percentage of the budget,

- Salaries of men and women in the positions of producer and director.
- b) Content indicators measuring the representation and role of women on screen (fiction projects only):
- Bechdel test applied under the female and male variants
 - Leading role: percentage of women and men
 - Second and third roles: percentage of women and men
 - Occupations and responsibilities of the main character (women and men),
 - Age of the main character (women and men),
 - Detection of stereotypes, clichés, nudity (women and men).

Annual scoreboard

Table showing trends in the indicators and facilitating an analysis of the results. A snapshot of the situation at a given moment and trends in the figures over time make it possible to assess the situation and take steps to improve it.

APPENDIX 2: EURIMAGES STRATEGY FOR EQUALITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN IN EUROPEAN CINEMA

ACTION PLAN 2016 / 2017

Actions	Aims, expected results	Incentives	Means, tools, methods	Partners
1. Enumerate, study, analyse	Increase awareness of the place of women in the cinematographic industry, in front of and behind the camera	Adopt a strategy for equality of opportunity, follow the results	System for information gathering on gender in co-production projects (see appendix 1)	Producers and professionals input the information on the Eurimages platform
1. Enumerate, study, analyse		Identify future areas to study and propose supplementary measures for reinforcing Eurimages involvement in male/female equality, a fundamental value of the Council of Europe	Follow-up, score-card, evaluation	Council of Europe, other international organisations, NGOs, competent national authorities
2. Raise awareness, communicate	Raise awareness on the issue of the status of women in the cinema industry, as concerns both their on-screen representation and professional situation	Continue to hold outreach meetings during the sessions held in the different member States with the aim of raising awareness in the countries concerned.	Outreach meetings, round tables, Masterclasses and other events	National authorities of the host countries
2. Raise awareness, communicate	Facilitate the exchange of information	Participate in different conferences and discussions organised on the subject. Publish studies, analyses and evaluations carried out.	Web page, press releases, "strategy for equality" brochure, ethical charter...	Festivals
2. Raise awareness, communicate	Disseminate good practices	Identify, collect, publish good practices, measure the benefits		National funds, NGOs
3. Act, improve	Highlight the work of female filmmakers, celebrate their work and achievements	Encourage experienced directors/producers so that they become role-models and inspire young women in the film industry	Masterclass	
3. Act, improve	Advocate for more opportunities for women	Support existing initiatives to help women in the industry, for example, coaching, courses, co-production summer schools, etc.	Financial support	NGOs
3. Act, improve		Create a development award for a female scriptwriter/director to be presented during a festival		Festivals, work in progress
3. Act, improve	Create greater visibility and recognition for female filmmakers	Give an award to a female director	Financial support	Festivals
3. Act, improve	Tackle the problem of the difficulty for female directors in obtaining financing	Analyse which measures could help to redress the current imbalance whereby female directors are attached to lower-budget films than their male counterparts		Institutes and national funds, professional associations, NGOs

Actions	Aims, expected results	Incentives	Means, tools, methods	Partners
4. Stimulate action	Encourage all the member States to support equality between men and women in European cinema	Encourage the members of the Eurimages Board of Management to become ambassadors for equality and to assess how their respective Funds or Institutes are performing as far as gender equality is concerned.		Members of the Board of Management
4. Stimulate action	Encourage member States to start carrying out data monitoring in order to evaluate the equality situation in their own film industry	Recommend the creation of a database, follow-up tables, a list of indicators for recording information and analysing the evolution of the situation	Develop IT tools following the Eurimages model	Institutes and national funds, national laboratories for equality, European Audiovisual Observatory, the EFARN group
4. Stimulate action	Encourage and promote the work of associations who are active in the area of equality	Consult and collaborate with NGOs and other non-profit organisations	Collaboration agreements, partnerships	EWA - Raising Films - CIMA - Deuxième Regard
5. Monitor, evaluate	Evaluate the impact of steps taken and the evolution of the situation	Produce an annual evaluation report	Monitoring and outcome indicators	