LE LAB
FEMMES DE CINEMA

10 YEARS OF POLICIES FOR GENDER PARITY IN EUROPEAN CINEMA: FUNDING, SAFEGUARDING, TRANSFORMING

2026 REPORT

IN COLLABORATION WITH

Observatoire européen de l'audiovisuel

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CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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THE LAB'S EDITORIAL

"In ten years, Europe has learnt to count the women in cinema.
It must now learn to share power.
We won't wait until 2062."

Ten years ago, virtually no country had figures to objectively demonstrate the glaring under-representation of women and the imbalances at work in European cinema. Ten years ago, the #MeToo movement was set to bring about lasting change in the fight against sexist and sexual violence and harassment in the film industry. Ten years ago, few institutions regarded gender equality as a major cultural issue. **Ten years on, the anniversary study by le Lab Femmes de Cinéma takes stock.**

Since 2016, most European countries have been tracking the number of women working in film, and an increasing number have adopted measures to promote their involvement. However, **progress has plateaued at around one in four films directed by a woman**, and the gains remain fragile: some countries are backtracking, and measures are being slowed down or even halted depending on the political climate. The figures force us to be uncompromisingly realistic: at the average rate of the past decade, **we would have to wait until 2062 to achieve gender parity in European cinema**. That is more than thirty-five years. For the Lab and for all the professionals fighting on the ground, this timeframe is quite simply unacceptable.

Ten years of European experience tell us one simple thing: **the figures will only change if we change the rules.** The coming decade must be one of structural transformation: one that takes action on budgets, careers, decision-making bodies and power dynamics. At the conclusion of this anniversary study, the Lab Femmes de Cinéma affirms **five convictions**:

1. **Counting is no longer enough**. Data collection was the essential first step towards moving beyond denial. But measuring a problem has never been enough to solve it. We must move beyond declarations of intent and take action.

2. **Money is the lifeblood of the industry, and without financial leverage, nothing changes**. Quotas, bonuses or penalties, and various financial

incentives are the most powerful drivers of gender parity. Two-thirds of organisations recognise this as crucial, yet barely more than a third actually use it. Why? Public money is not neutral: it must stop funding the automatic perpetuation of the status quo.

3. **A virtuous circle is within our grasp; let's seize this opportunity**: when women hold key positions, teams become more gender-balanced at all levels. Teams with greater gender parity are teams where violence is on the decline. And where violence is on the decline, women stay, progress and, in turn, rise to key positions.

4. **Women represent a largely untapped reservoir of creativity.** On what grounds are we depriving ourselves of all these untold stories? Why are we allowing the young female directors we have trained to give up the profession? Even more alarming: in a complete reversal, measures promoting equality - which are a source of renewed creativity - are now sometimes presented as obstacles to creative freedom, as a way of justifying their non-adoption. Why are our industries turning their backs on diversity? Our conviction is stronger than ever: equality has never restricted art; it broadens and enlivens it.

5. **In the face of political headwinds, it is essential that we stay the course and redouble our efforts, together.** For decades, we have been raising our voices. They have carried more weight in recent years but are still too often tolerated rather than listened to. **To be truly heard, we must build lasting coalitions between organisations, the research community and public authorities, at both national and European level.**

These convictions underpin our recommendations: public funding as a lever, the law as a bulwark, the fight against violence as a prerequisite, Europe as a guarantor, and the entire sector as a conduit, from film sets to the screen.

For the past ten years, the Lab Femmes de Cinéma has been working to document public policies in order to raise awareness and equip decision-makers. We are delighted to see that this study has become a benchmark praised by European film institutes and a point of reference in academic circles, which have directly informed this tenth edition. True to its role as a *think tank*, the Lab reaffirms its commitment:

to continue analysing public policies, to facilitate this essential dialogue between public authorities, researchers and industry professionals, and to champion the diversity of narratives on screen. Equality in cinema is not a concession: it is the sine qua non for the vitality and renewal of European creativity. We will stay the course, and we will not wait until 2062.

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INTRODUCTION TO LE LAB FEMMES DE CINÉMA

Established in 2017 and run by l'association Révélations Culturelles, le Lab Femmes de Cinéma is a think tank focusing on gender equality and diversity in the film and audiovisual sectors. Its aim is to generate ideas, influence policies, propose initiatives and encourage experimentation, with a view to **making the European film and audiovisual sectors more gender-equal and inclusive**. Our work centres on three main areas:

- **Showcasing the careers and work of women in cinema** by producing **masterclasses** and **podcasts**. To date, we have organised more than 30 masterclasses and five seasons of podcasts, featuring over 60 female guests.
- Transforming industry practices by organising **collective intelligence workshops** to generate ideas. In this regard, the Lab was particularly involved in 2024 with the **RESPECT**[1] **group**, which combats sexist and sexual violence and harassment in the film industry, and is currently working on structuring and coordinating the 'Women in Culture' meta-network, a coalition of associations from cultural and creative industries and the media.
- **Influencing institutions**, notably by conducting this annual study on measures to promote gender parity in European cinema. In partnership with the European Audiovisual Observatory and EFAD, this study has, over the years, established itself as a strategic tool for promoting gender parity at European level.

In addition to these three areas of focus, the Lab carries out regular monitoring and analysis of gender parity and diversity in the audiovisual sector, as well as awareness-raising campaigns at major international festivals and national awards ceremonies. Our expertise is sought after by both festivals (Clermont-Ferrand, Annecy, Les Arcs, Sœurs Jumelles, Cine Por Mujeres in Madrid, Palic, Cannes…) and institutions (the Ministry of Culture in 2026, UNI Europa…).

The Lab stands out for its European dimension and its approach based on collective intelligence. This study is supported by the Sisley d'Ornano Foundation,

[1] https://legrouperespect.wixsite.com/legrouperespect

STUDIOCANAL, the Ministry of Culture, the CNC (National Centre for Cinema and the Moving Image), and Eurimages.

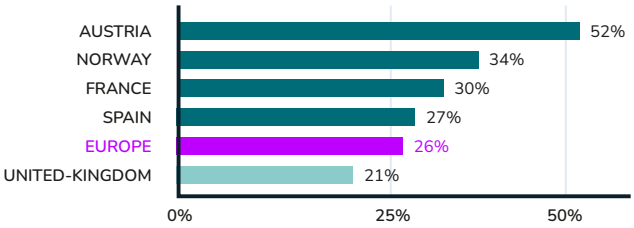
KEY FINDINGS

THE PLACE OF WOMEN DIRECTOR IN EUROPEAN CINEMA

DATA PROVIDED BY THE EUROPEAN AUDIOVISUAL

2025 : THE FIRST COUNTRY TO REACH PARITY

PROPORTION OF FILMS DIRECTED BY WOMEN BY COUNTRY IN 2025



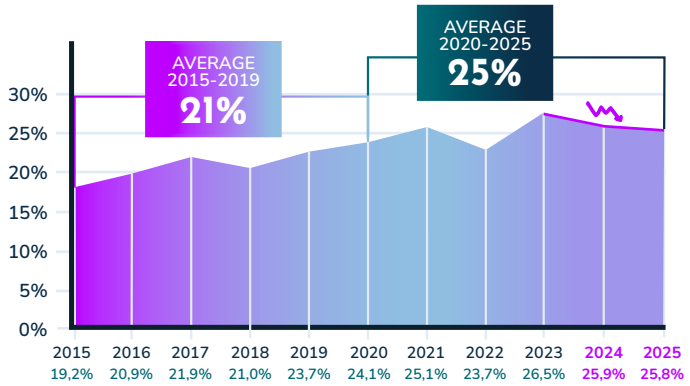
Selection of countries corresponding to those featured in a dedicated focus on their gender parity policies.

In 2025, the share of films directed by women stands at **26% on average across Europe. For the very first time, one country exceeds the 50% threshold**: Austria. Overall, strong year-to-year fluctuations can be observed. An analysis based on a multi-year average is therefore preferred here.

SLOW AND FRAGILE PROGRESS

TRENDS IN THE PROPORTION OF FILMS DIRECTED BY WOMEN* IN EUROPE 2015-2025

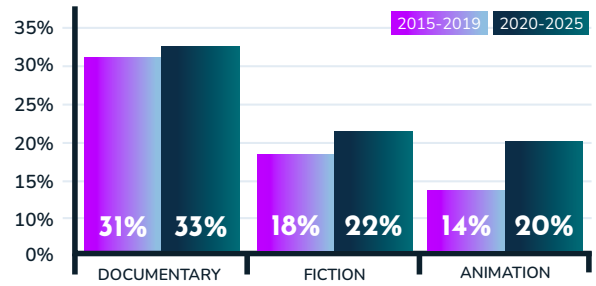
*including co-productions with at least one female director



There has been real progress in the share of films directed by women in Europe on average: **it rose from 19.2% in 2015 to 25.8% in 2025** (+6.6 pts). However, this progress is **not linear**: although a peak of 26.5% was reached in 2023, some years saw declines (2018, 2022, 2024 and 2025). Thus, 2025 shows a drop for the second consecutive year, a first since 2015, a sign that **a glass ceiling seems to be setting in. At the pace observed since 2015, parity would be reached in... 2062!**

WOMEN DIRECTORS BETTER REPRESENTED IN DOCUMENTARY

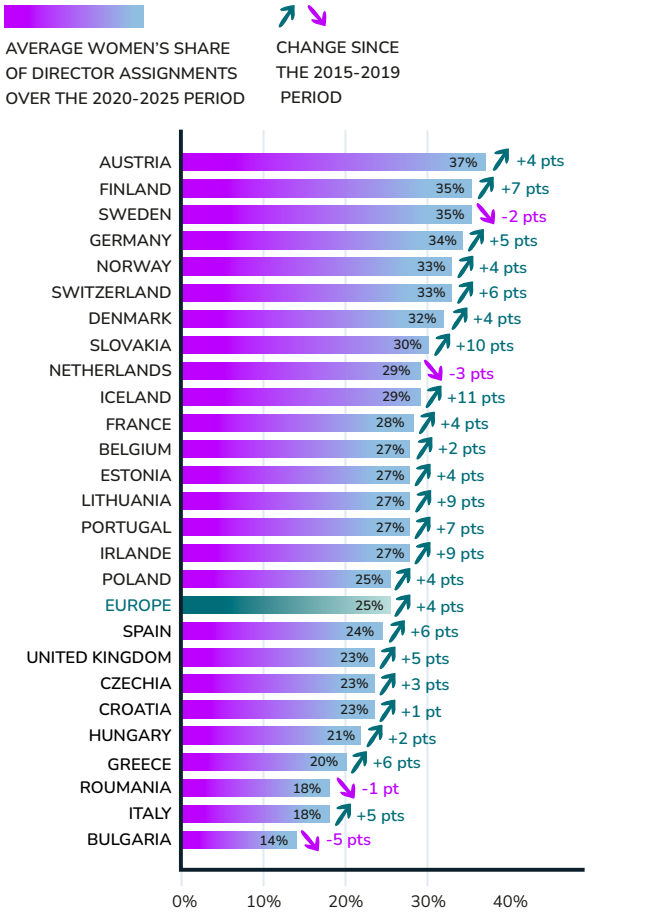
TRENDS IN THE PROPORTION OF WOMEN DIRECTORS IN EUROPE BY FILM GENRE



Between 2015 and 2025, **the share of active women directors increased across all types of films in Europe**. Women directors remain proportionally **more present in documentary**, where the average budget per film is lower than in fiction and animation. For the first time, however, we note that animation, where the percentage of women directors has long been particularly low, now has a share of women directors close to that of fiction.

2020 - 2025 : A MULTI-SPEED EUROPE

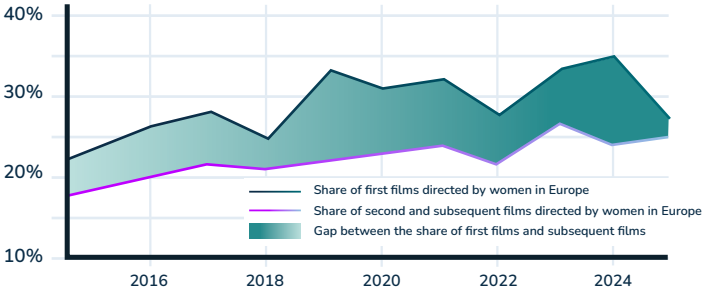
TRENDS IN THE AVERAGE PROPORTION OF FILMS DIRECTED BY WOMEN BY COUNTRY



Comparing the average share of films directed by women over 2015-2019 with 2020-2025, the vast **majority of European countries saw an increase** (shown here in green), while some countries saw a decline (Bulgaria, the Netherlands, Romania, Sweden). The top 5 countries over the 2020-2025 period are: Austria, Finland, Sweden, Germany and Norway.

A GRADUAL DECLINE IN THE PRESENCE OF WOMEN DIRECTORS AS CAREERS PROGRESS

TRENDS IN THE PROPORTION OF FILMS BY WOMEN IN EUROPE FROM FIRST FILMS TO SUBSEQUENT FILMS



Women, who make up on average 50% of film school students (Le Lab, 2019), appear to be gradually driven out of the industry. **The share of first films directed by women in Europe averages 29% over the 2015-2025 period, dropping to 23% for second and subsequent films.** Alarming signal: the share of first films directed by women has never exceeded 35% and is declining again in 2025, to the point of approaching the share of second and subsequent films directed by women, which has historically been lower.

PUBLIC POLICIES FOR GENDER PARITY IN EUROPEAN CINEMA

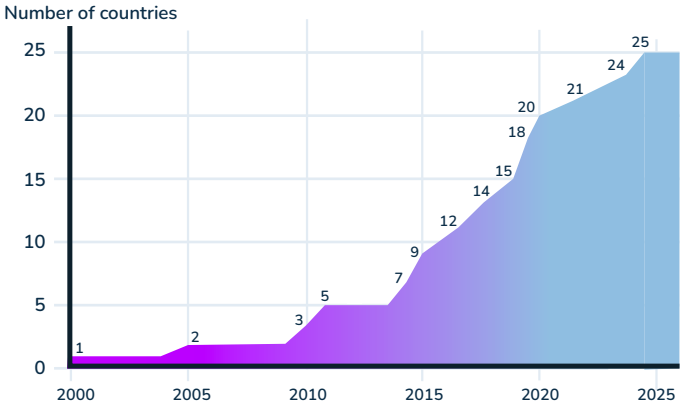
SOURCE: LE LAB FEMMES DE CINÉMA 2026 DATA

METHODOLOGY:

- QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO NATIONAL FILM INSTITUTES: 33 COUNTRIES RESPONDED IN 2026.
- INTERVIEWS WITH 7 EUROPEAN RESEARCHERS.
- INTERVIEWS WITH 5 NATIONAL FILM INSTITUTES.

A GROWING NUMBER OF EUROPEAN COUNTRIES IMPLEMENTING MEASURES

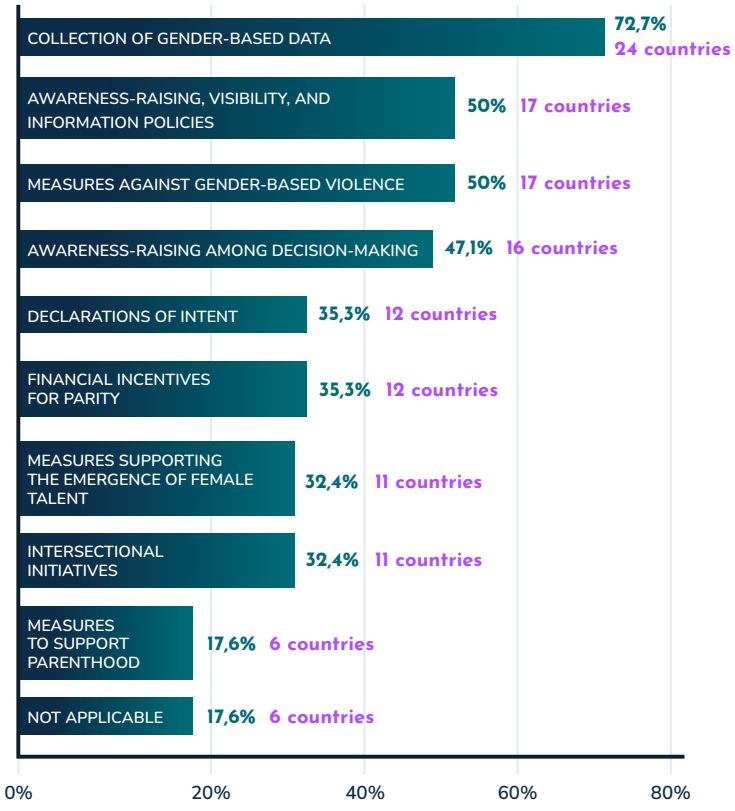
YEAR IN WHICH EUROPEAN COUNTRIES LAUNCHED A GENDER PARITY POLICY



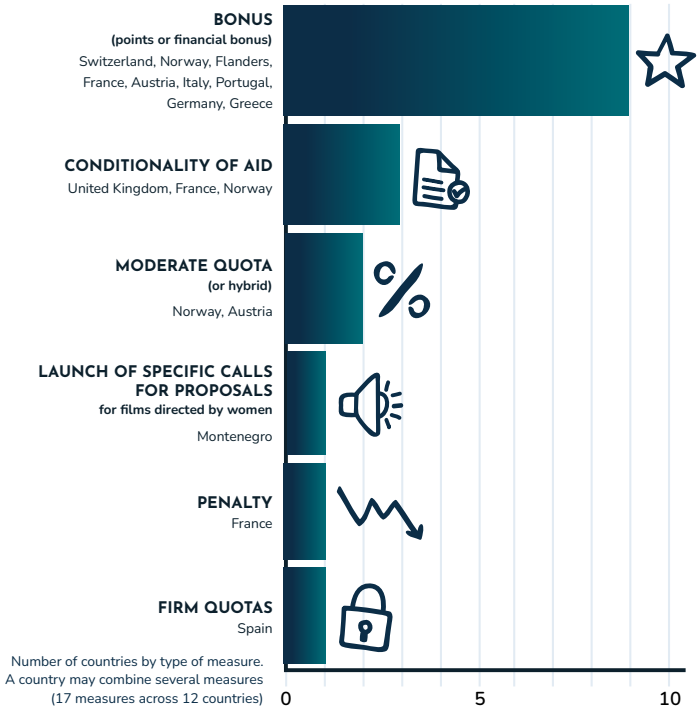
In 2026, the majority of responding European countries are committed, to varying degrees, to gender parity in cinema. This ranges from statements of intent to the adoption of concrete measures. When asked to define the stage their parity policy has reached in 2026, nearly 60% of the 33 responding countries (19) describe themselves as being on a positive trajectory (implementation, strengthening or diversification of measures, mature policy). However, nearly 40% of the countries (13) that responded to our survey have yet to put any concrete measure in place («No policy planned or in place to date» or «Intention stated, but no measures adopted yet»).

THE RANGE OF MEASURES ADOPTED TO PROMOTE GENDER PARITY

X% Share of countries that have implemented this type of measure
X countries Number of countries that have implemented this type of measure



SPOTLIGHT ON FINANCIAL LEVERS



Countries that have implemented a financial lever overwhelmingly favor incentive-based measures: bonuses, in the form of points or financial bonuses, are by far the most widespread (9 countries). One country (Montenegro) stands out with a more targeted mechanism: the launch of specific calls for proposals for women directors. More restrictive measures remain rare: conditionality of aid applies to 3 countries, moderate or hybrid quotas to 2, and the penalty (France) and firm quotas (Spain) are each applied by only one country.

FINANCIAL INCENTIVES AS SEEN BY EUROPEAN FILM INSTITUTES

22 countries

MANY BELIEVE IN IT

22 out of 33 countries (67%) cite financial incentives as an essential lever for achieving parity.

12 countries

TOO FEW DO IT

Only 12 countries (one third) have put them in place.

7 countries

THOSE WHO DO ARE WON OVER

Nearly 60% of the countries that have implemented them (7 out of 12) consider them the most effective

While two thirds of responding countries identify financial incentives as key levers, it is worth noting that **only slightly more than a third report having implemented them**. All the researchers we met also identified the financial lever as the essential ingredient for generating concrete results. The responding national film institutes confirmed this: nearly 60% of the countries that have implemented it cite it as the most effective measure.

10 YEARS, 10 KEY FINDINGS

For its anniversary edition, the Lab's study brings together the perspectives of various institutes and researchers to take stock of ten years of public policies promoting gender parity in European cinema. It highlights the dynamics at play, the conditions for success and the obstacles that still need to be overcome.

1. Progress is being made, but it remains slow and uneven: at this rate, gender parity will be achieved in… 2062[2]!

Over the past ten years, the proportion of films directed by women in Europe has risen, from 19.2% in 2015 to 25.8% in 2025 (+6.6 percentage points), but this trend is far from linear and varies considerably from country to country. After peaking at 26.5% in 2023, the proportion of films directed by women fell slightly in 2024 and 2025, before stabilising at around 26%. This stagnation at European level and the slow progress in certain countries call for a review of the development and implementation of policies to accelerate change.

2. Europe is moving at different speeds in terms of public policy

The commitment to gender parity has become widespread across Europe, but countries are at very different stages of maturity. In 2026, 19 countries (out of 33 respondents, or 58%) reported being engaged in a positive trajectory (launching, strengthening or maturing measures), whilst 13 countries (nearly 40% of respondents) have not yet adopted any measures or are still only at the intention stage. Some even report a phase of stagnation or regression, which should be alarming. In any case, the decisive role played by European film institutes in driving change within the industry is confirmed.

3. To bring about change, figures are necessary but not sufficient

Statistical studies are the primary catalyst for public policy cited by the institutes and the most commonly adopted measure (24 countries). Collecting data makes inequalities visible, documents trends and enables the development of evidence-based policies. But data collection is only a starting point: it must be accompanied by concrete measures capable of bringing about change. It should be noted that nearly 30% of countries still lack statistical studies on gender inequalities, and certain essential data – notably on budget and pay gaps, the

[2] The methodology for the calculation is explained in part I.

proportion of women in teams, and qualitative data on women's experiences – remain largely insufficient.

4. Money: the lifeblood of the fight for gender parity

Bonuses, maluses, quotas, earmarked funds, conditionality of aid: financial mechanisms play a central role in the policies that have proved most effective. Experience in Europe shows that they can bring about tangible changes in behaviour when they are sufficiently well-structured and maintained over time. Two-thirds of countries regard them as a key lever, but only one-third have put them in place.

5. Strong and sustained political will is the condition for success

Public policies cannot produce lasting effects without strong and consistent political will. Research organisations identify the commitment of public authorities as one of the main levers for change; conversely, a lack of political commitment is among the primary obstacles encountered. European experiences also show that progress and measures can quickly be reversed when political priorities change.

6. There is no silver bullet: it is the combination of several key principles that brings about change

An analysis of the last ten years shows that the most successful initiatives combine several levers: data, funding, career support, combating violence and discrimination, raising awareness, diversifying decision-making bodies, etc. The issue is therefore not to find 'the right measure', but to build a coherent system of measures that reinforce one another, that hold the sector to account, and that are evaluated so they can be adjusted.

7. Beyond the figures: the necessary transformation of the distribution of power

Gender parity cannot be reduced to a mere question of representation. The increase in the number of women in key positions is a key indicator, but it does not in itself guarantee structural change. Ten countries consider that their measures improve statistical representation without sufficiently altering the balance of power, whilst twelve note that progress remains concentrated in certain professions or levels of responsibility. The next step, therefore, is to examine who makes the decisions, who controls the resources, who puts together the teams and who gains access to the best-funded productions.

8. Equality must be considered for the entire length of women's careers and in all their diversity

The challenge is not merely to bring more women into the film industry, but to enable them to remain there, to progress and to reach positions of responsibility. Policies must take greater account of career paths, emerging talent, parenthood, working conditions and the various forms of discrimination that can occur simultaneously. A truly inclusive policy cannot, therefore, treat 'women' as a homogeneous group.

9. Diversifying teams promotes equity and contributes to greater creativity

The diversity of those who make films contributes to the diversity of the stories told. Encouraging women to take up key roles also means encouraging their participation in a wide range of film professions. A film is a collective endeavour, and the transformation of the sector depends on diversifying all the teams involved in its creation. The challenge is therefore twofold: to open more roles and areas of responsibility to women, and to use this diversity as a catalyst for renewal in filmmaking.

10. The coming decade must be one of cooperation and perseverance

Ten years of public policy have shown that results take time, that they can be fragile, and that they must be regularly assessed and adjusted. One of the main limitations identified by the funding bodies is that their policies only apply to the films they fund, and the engagement of professionals is seen as the primary driver for an effective policy: sustainable change therefore relies on cooperation between public authorities, funding bodies, professionals, researchers, associations, schools, broadcasters and festivals. Gender parity is built collectively and must be defended over the long term.

All these lessons are interlinked and serve to support the success of public policies promoting gender equality.

METHODOLOGY

1. AN ANNIVERSARY EDITION FEATURING A BRAND-NEW METHODOLOGY AND FORMAT

The Lab Femmes de Cinéma was established in 2017 as a follow-up to the annual study on European gender equality policies, launched in 2016 by Les Arcs Film Festival during its 8th edition, which was dedicated to female directors. As an offshoot and partner of the festival, the Lab has been carrying out this study every year since then.

To mark the 10th edition of this study, the Lab wished to use the occasion to take stock of the last ten years. This year's perspective and methodology are therefore unprecedented. Our aim is to highlight the diversity of approaches developed across Europe to promote gender parity, **to draw lessons from these ten years of action and analysis, in order to contribute to a collective reflection** that will shape future policies.

This new edition of the study differs from previous years:

- it provides a **review of the last ten years** rather than a snapshot of public policies at a single point in time;
- it offers a **summary of the lessons shared** by all countries, rather than an exhaustive account of measures and data on a country-by-country basis;
- for the first time, it includes **contributions from researchers**, as we believe it is important to strengthen the links between the academic world, public authorities and professional organisations working towards greater gender parity in the sector;
- for the first time, it includes **qualitative interviews with several film institutes**, thereby complementing the responses provided via a questionnaire.

The study continues to draw on its two **key partners:**

- **the European Audiovisual Observatory** (EAO)[3]: we have been using their statistics since 2020;
- **the EFAD** (European Film Agency Directors Association[4]), which brings together the national film and audiovisual agencies of various European countries. Since 2021, EFAD has been putting us in touch with its members[5], reviewing the study and disseminating it to its members and network. It also organises an annual presentation of the study's main findings as part of an online event.

To carry out this study, we drew on the following resources, each of which is detailed below:

- **a questionnaire sent to all European national centres (33 responding countries)**;
- **7 interviews with European researchers** to provide a more analytical perspective on our findings and to foster dialogue with the academic community;
- **5 semi-structured qualitative interviews with several European national centres** (France, Austria, the United Kingdom, Norway and Spain, which contributed in writing);
- **statistical data on the proportion of women in film projects, provided by the European Audiovisual Observatory (EAO);**
- use of **additional academic resources,** listed in the bibliography.

The following report is not intended to provide an exhaustive list of all resources on the subject of public policies promoting gender parity, but rather to highlight previously unpublished statistics, research or interviews.

[3] To read the latest EAO report on women's participation in European film production : https://rm.coe.int/gender-report-film-and-tv

[4] https://www.europeanfilmagencies.eu/

[5] The EFAD association brings together 38 film and audiovisual centres from the countries of the European Union, as well as from Iceland, Norway, the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Ukraine, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Albania.

2. METHODOLOGY OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO NATIONAL FILM CENTRES

As we do every year, we sent a questionnaire – a new one this year – to the national film centres. We sent it to the institutes in the following **37 countries**[6]: Albania, Austria, Belgium (Flanders and the Wallonia-Brussels Federation), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, the Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine and the United Kingdom.

33 countries replied to us between June and September 2026. In 2026, only the Wallonia–Brussels Federation, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ireland, Luxembourg and Ukraine did not respond to our enquiries.

In 2026, we asked the various institutes questions concerning:

1. **Their national institute's policy on gender parity** – for example: *How would you describe the current stage of your institute's policy on gender parity?*
2. **Data and statistical monitoring** – for example, regarding the type of gender-disaggregated data they collect.
3. **The drivers and limitations of the policies put in place** – for example: *What measures are likely to strengthen gender parity in the film sector, and what is the impact of the measures implemented? What are the main obstacles to the development, implementation or actual impact of some of your measures? Have you identified any limitations on the impact these measures can have?*
4. **Their outlook and emerging challenges** – for example: *What do you consider to be the priorities for the next ten years in advancing gender parity in the film industry in your country?*
5. **Conclusion** – for example: *How do you currently assess the momentum towards gender parity in your national film industry?*

[6] A total of 39 national centres were contacted, of which 34 replied.

Some questions on the form were compulsory, others optional. Some were open-ended, whilst others offered tick-box options. The full questionnaire and the list of responding organisations are available in the appendices.

A few **methodological limitations** should be highlighted.

- Firstly, it should be noted that European countries are at varying stages both in terms of implementing measures to promote gender parity and in terms of their outcomes. Furthermore, they differ significantly in terms of their economic, political, social and cultural contexts, and the film industry does not carry the same political or economic weight in each of the countries studied. The measures taken and their results are therefore not always comparable.
- We should also bear in mind the dual timeframe: on the one hand, the measures that will have statistical consequences in the coming years; and on the other, the EAO's statistical data, which relate to a past period and are the result of measures adopted previously.
- For the 2026 study, we have based our analysis on the self-reported responses provided by film institutes to this year's questionnaire. The results may therefore differ from the analyses carried out in 2025 (which were sometimes based on available documentation where countries had not responded). There may also be a bias in the responses, because some institutions may consider that issues relating to gender parity are not a priority, or because it may be uncomfortable to acknowledge the slow pace at which the expected effects materialise once measures have been put in place.
- Finally, questions offering tick-box options yielded responses based primarily on these suggestions, even though the institutes always had the option to add other answers.

Throughout the study, when we refer to a country, we are in fact referring to its film institute (e.g. 'Finland' for the 'Finnish Film Foundation'), and more specifically to the response it provided in the questionnaire.

3. METHODOLOGY OF THE QUALITATIVE SECTION

To explore the findings from the questionnaire in greater depth, this year we also conducted **7 interviews with researchers** and **5 interviews with film institutes.**

Regarding the **researchers**, we sought to diversify and, as far as possible, prioritise meetings with individuals who had carried out comparative analyses of public policies and who came from different parts of Europe.

As for the **institutes** selected for in-depth qualitative interviews, they were chosen because they represented different parts of Europe (Austria, Spain, France, Norway, the United Kingdom) and had one or more flagship measures that proved to be particularly innovative or effective.

All the interviews took place between July and September 2026 via videoconference and lasted approximately one hour each, with the exception of Spain, which provided a detailed written response.

The full list of interviewees is available in the appendices.

4. METHODOLOGY OF THE QUANTITATIVE SECTION OF THE EAO

The figures relating to the proportion of women in film projects in Europe and in each country are those published by our partner, the European Audiovisual Observatory (EAO).

- The quantitative analysis is based on the EAO's LUMIERE database, which compiles annual figures for films released in cinemas from a wide variety of sources, including national film agencies and statistical offices;
- The study's statistical sample comprises European feature films produced between 2015 and 2025 and released in cinemas across Europe during the same period. These data include only those films for which it was possible to identify at least one commercial cinema screening in one of the European markets covered by the LUMIERE database. The year of production was chosen as the indicator rather than the year of release;
- Only countries that produce at least 10 films per year are included in the EAO study;
- The data consider the origin of film works rather than the nationality of the directors. A film is considered to be of European origin if it is produced and predominantly financed by a European country.

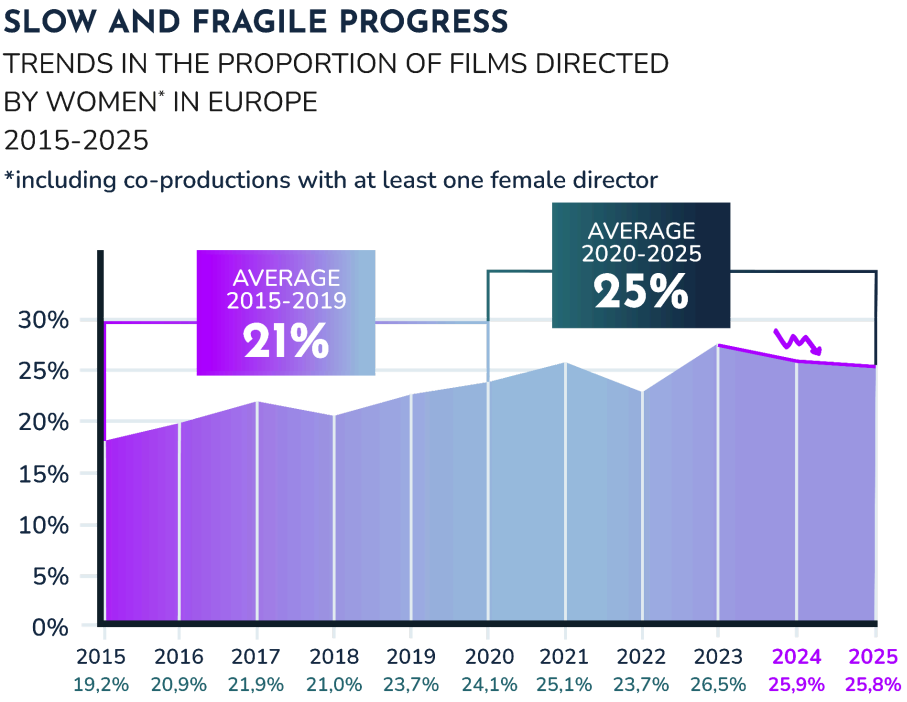
- The analysis only includes feature-length films. In the analysis, animated feature films are considered separately from live-action fiction films;
- The gender of each film professional was identified and tagged by the European Audiovisual Observatory, based on information published on IMDb.

It should be noted that these figures do not necessarily correspond to each country's official production statistics, but refer to the sample used for the study, which is drawn from the EAO's LUMIERE database.

I. TEN YEARS ON: A MULTI-SPEED EUROPE

1. 2015-2025: A DECADE OF FRAGILE AND FLUCTUATING PROGRESS TOWARDS GENDER PARITY IN THE FILM INDUSTRY

Statistical data from the European Audiovisual Observatory enable us to observe the trend in the proportion of films directed by women (*share of director assignments*) and the proportion of female directors active in the profession (*share of active directors*). If we focus on female directors, as the *Lab Femmes de cinéma* study has always done, here are our findings.



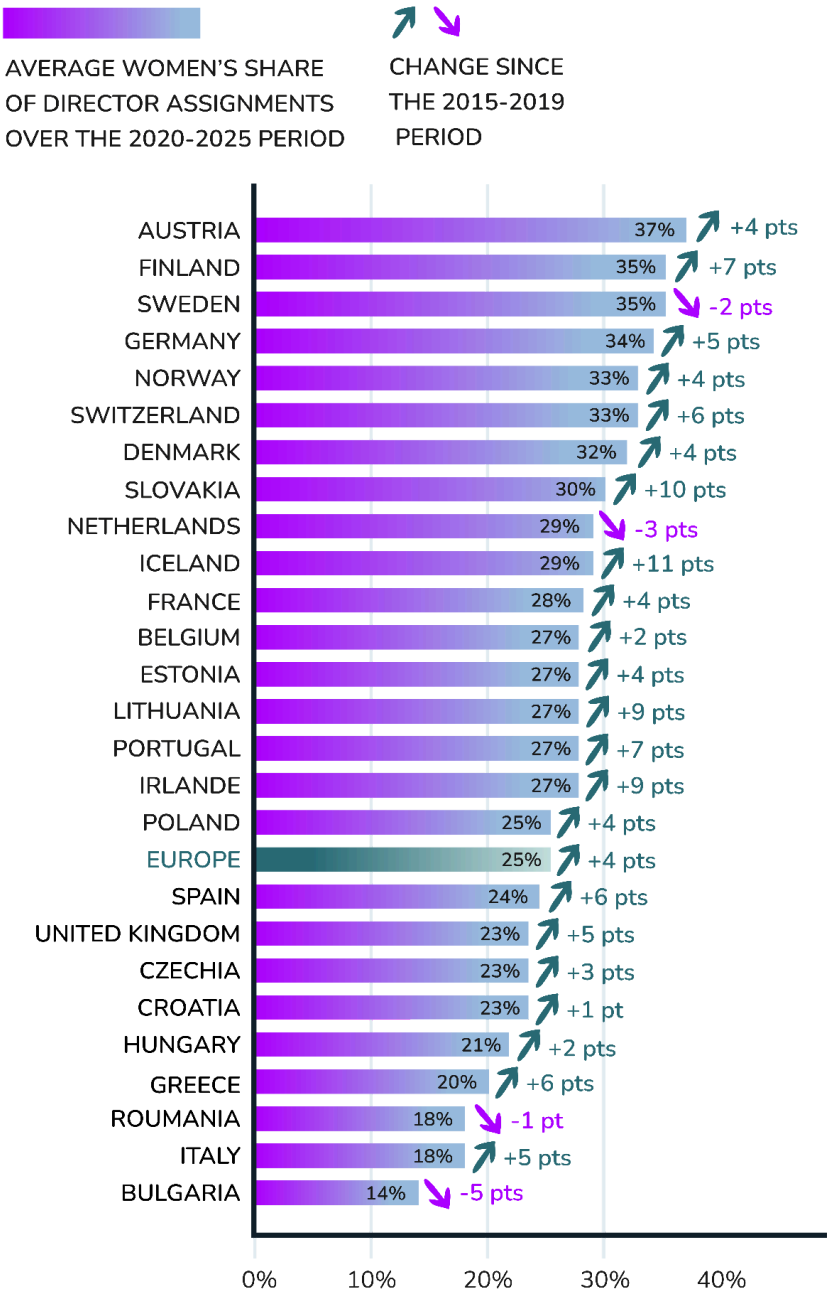
Firstly, we observe a **genuine increase** in the average proportion of films directed by women across Europe: **it rose from 19.2% in 2015 to 25.8 % in 2025** (+6.6 percentage points). However, **this increase is not linear**: whilst a peak of 26.5% was reached in 2023, some years saw declines (2018, 2022, 2024 and 2025). Thus, 2025 shows a drop for the second consecutive year - a first since 2015 - **suggesting that a glass ceiling is taking hold. At the average rate observed since 2015, parity would be achieved in… 2062[7].** Over the period 2020-2025, the

[7] If the trend observed between 2015 and 2025 were to continue at the same rate (+6.6 percentage points over 10 years, or an average of 0.66 percentage points per year), and taking the 25.8% figure

average proportion of films directed by women in Europe was **25.2%.** It stood at **21.3%** for 2015-2019.

2020 - 2025 : A MULTI-SPEED EUROPE

TRENDS IN THE AVERAGE PROPORTION OF FILMS DIRECTED BY WOMEN BY COUNTRY

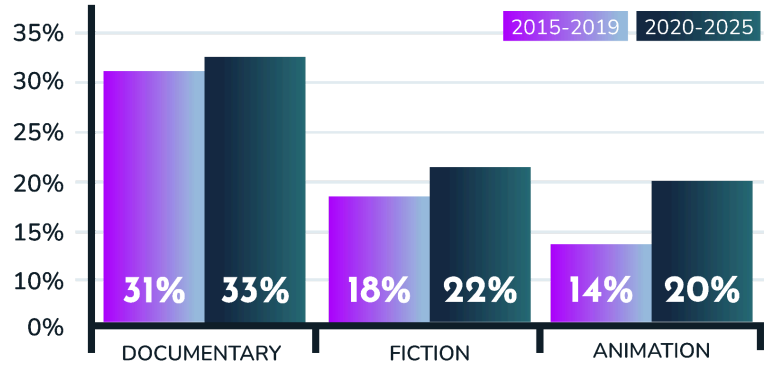


for 2025 as a starting point, the proportion of films directed by women would reach 50% by 2062 (projected using linear extrapolation).

If we compare the average share of films directed by women over the 2015-2019 period with that of the 2020-2025 period, the **vast majority of European countries have seen an increase** (shown here in green), whilst several countries have seen a decline (Bulgaria, the Netherlands, Romania, Sweden). The analysis covers several years as there can be significant year-on-year fluctuations. The top five countries for the 2020-2025 period are: **Austria, Finland, Sweden, Germany and Norway.**

WOMEN DIRECTORS BETTER REPRESENTED IN DOCUMENTARY

TRENDS IN THE PROPORTION OF WOMEN DIRECTORS IN EUROPE BY FILM GENRE

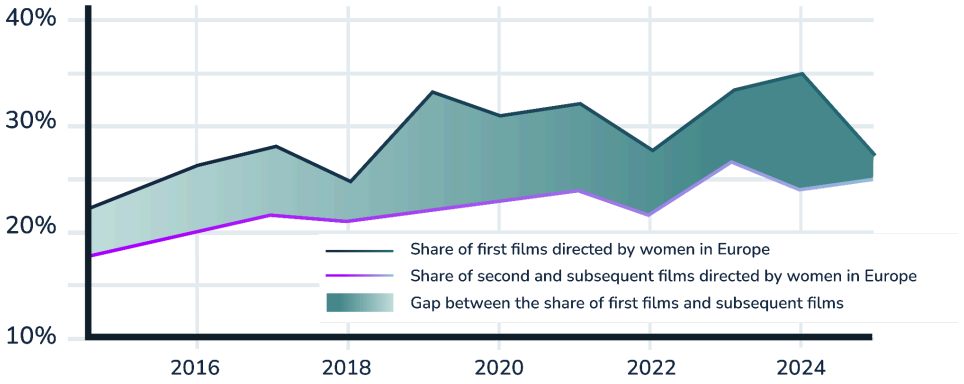


Between 2015 and 2025, **the proportion of active female directors[8] increased across all types of films in Europe**. However, female directors remain proportionally **more prevalent in documentary filmmaking,** where the average film budget is lower than in fiction and animation. For the first time, however, we note that animation - historically dominated by male directors - now features a share of female directors close to that of fiction. The proportion of active female directors in feature-length fiction films has changed only slightly (an average increase of 3 percentage points over ten years). Beyond the question of the proportion of female directors in Europe, there is also the issue of the budgets allocated to them.

[8] That is to say, the proportion of women amongst the professionals who have made a film produced between 2015 and 2025.

A GRADUAL DECLINE IN THE PRESENCE OF WOMEN DIRECTORS AS CAREERS PROGRESS

TRENDS IN THE PROPORTION OF FILMS BY WOMEN IN EUROPE FROM FIRST FILMS TO SUBSEQUENT FILMS



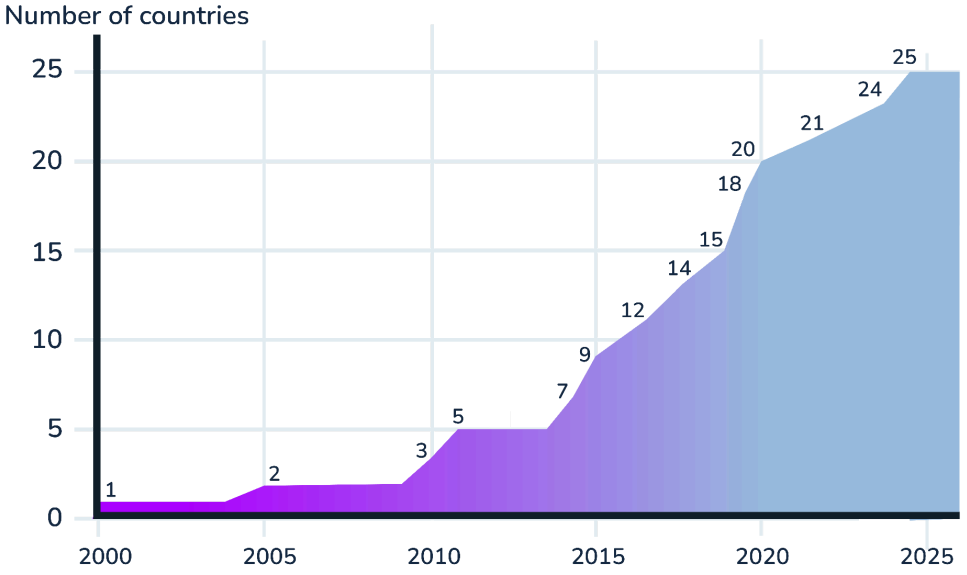
Nevertheless, a worrying trend persists. Women, who account for 50% of film school students (*Le Lab*, 2019), seem to be gradually disappearing from the sector. This is true even before the first film, as the proportion of **debut films directed by women in Europe averages 29%** over the period 2015-2025, falling to **23% for second and subsequent films**. An alarming sign: the proportion of first films directed by women has never exceeded 35 % and was once again on the decline in 2025, to the point of approaching the share of second and subsequent films directed by women, which has historically been lower.

2. 2015-2025: VARYING LEVELS OF COMMITMENT AMONG EUROPEAN COUNTRIES TO GENDER PARITY IN THE FILM INDUSTRY

In 2026, most European countries are committed, to varying degrees, to gender parity in the film industry. We can thus observe a steady increase, particularly from 2015 onwards, in the number of countries that have implemented specific measures to promote equality.

A GROWING NUMBER OF EUROPEAN COUNTRIES IMPLEMENTING MEASURES

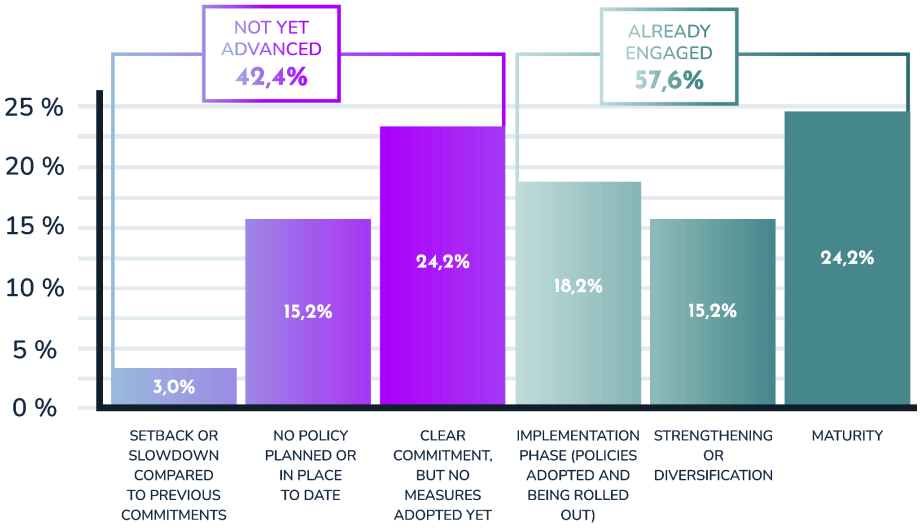
YEAR IN WHICH EUROPEAN COUNTRIES LAUNCHED A GENDER PARITY POLICY



We asked the national centres how they would define the stage their gender parity policy is at in 2026. As illustrated by the graph below, the responses provided by the national centres vary considerably.

HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE THE CURRENT PHASE OF YOUR INSTITUTE'S POLICY REGARDING GENDER PARITY?

33 SURVEY RESPONDENTS

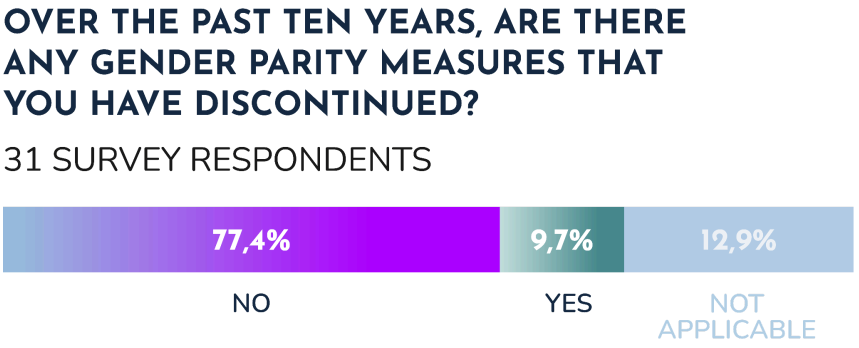


58% of responding countries state that they have implemented measures to promote gender parity and are on a positive trajectory (launch, strengthening or diversification, maturity)**:** this represents 19 countries**.** Nearly a quarter (8 countries) also consider that they have reached a stage of maturity regarding their public policy on gender parity, whilst 33% (11 countries) are still in the launch or consolidation phase of their measures.

It should be noted, however, that nearly 40% of the countries that responded to our survey have not yet put any measures in place ("No policy planned or in place to date" or "Clear commitment, but no measures adopted yet")**: this represents 13 countries.** Whilst 8 countries have stated their intention to do so without having yet put any measures in place (Albania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands), 5 countries confirm that they have not implemented any policy on this matter, nor do they intend to do so in the immediate future: these are Latvia, Poland, Romania, Serbia and Slovakia. We know that Bosnia and Herzegovina and Ukraine (which stands out as an exception in the current situation), which did not take part in this year's survey, had also not introduced any measures by 2025. This is therefore more than in 2025, when only four countries had neither implemented nor planned to implement measures to promote gender parity in their industry in the near future.

A faint signal emerges from this study: after several years in which an increasing number of countries had adopted policies in favour of gender parity, one film institute (representing 3% of responding countries) reported a **"setback or slowdown compared with a previous commitment**".

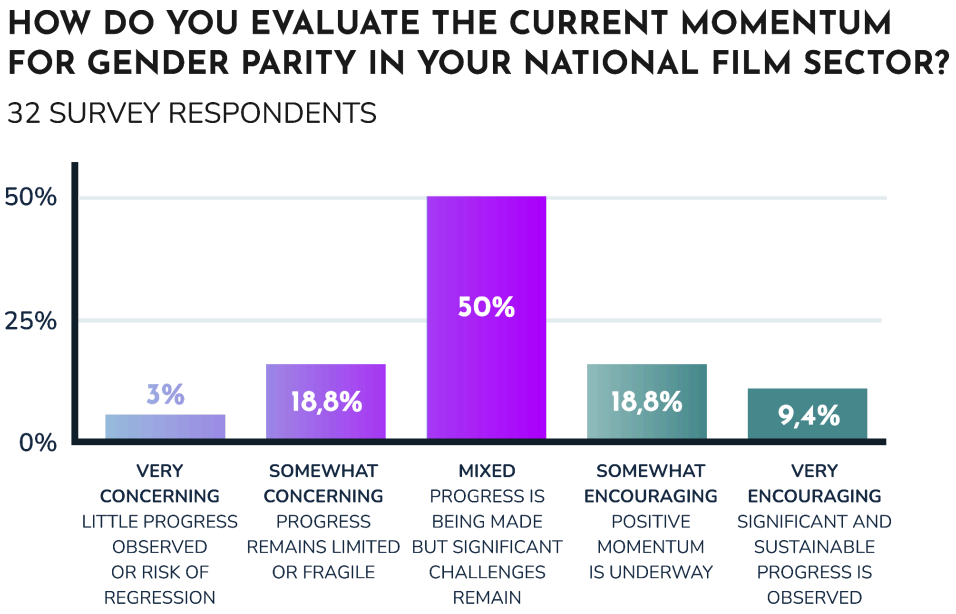
In order to assess the continuity and strategic shifts in their policies promoting gender parity, we also asked the national film centres whether any measures had been withdrawn over the past ten years.



The vast majority of film institutes state that they have not reversed any measures once they were introduced. Three countries, however, report having already discontinued a measure promoting gender parity, mainly because its effectiveness was deemed limited or because it was too time-consuming or costly (e.g. the discontinuation of the Bechdel test in Sweden). Only one film institute, in Denmark, informed us that it had stopped collecting statistical data, not only because of the workload involved but also due to a "*changed political climate*".

3. A SITUATION DEEMED "MIXED" BY HALF OF THE FILM INSTITUTES

We asked the film institutes to assess the **current momentum towards gender parity in their national film sectors**. The results vary, but it is clear that **half of the respondents (16 countries) take a mixed view, believing that progress is being made but that significant challenges remain**.



Nearly **30% of countries take an encouraging or very encouraging view**: Norway, Slovenia and Spain are the only three countries to rate the momentum as very encouraging. Conversely, **more than 20% find the momentum rather concerning or even very concerning.** France is the only country to consider the situation to be "very concerning, with little progress observed or a risk of regression": despite the initial success of the parity bonus, a decline in the proportion of films directed by women has been observed in recent years. France

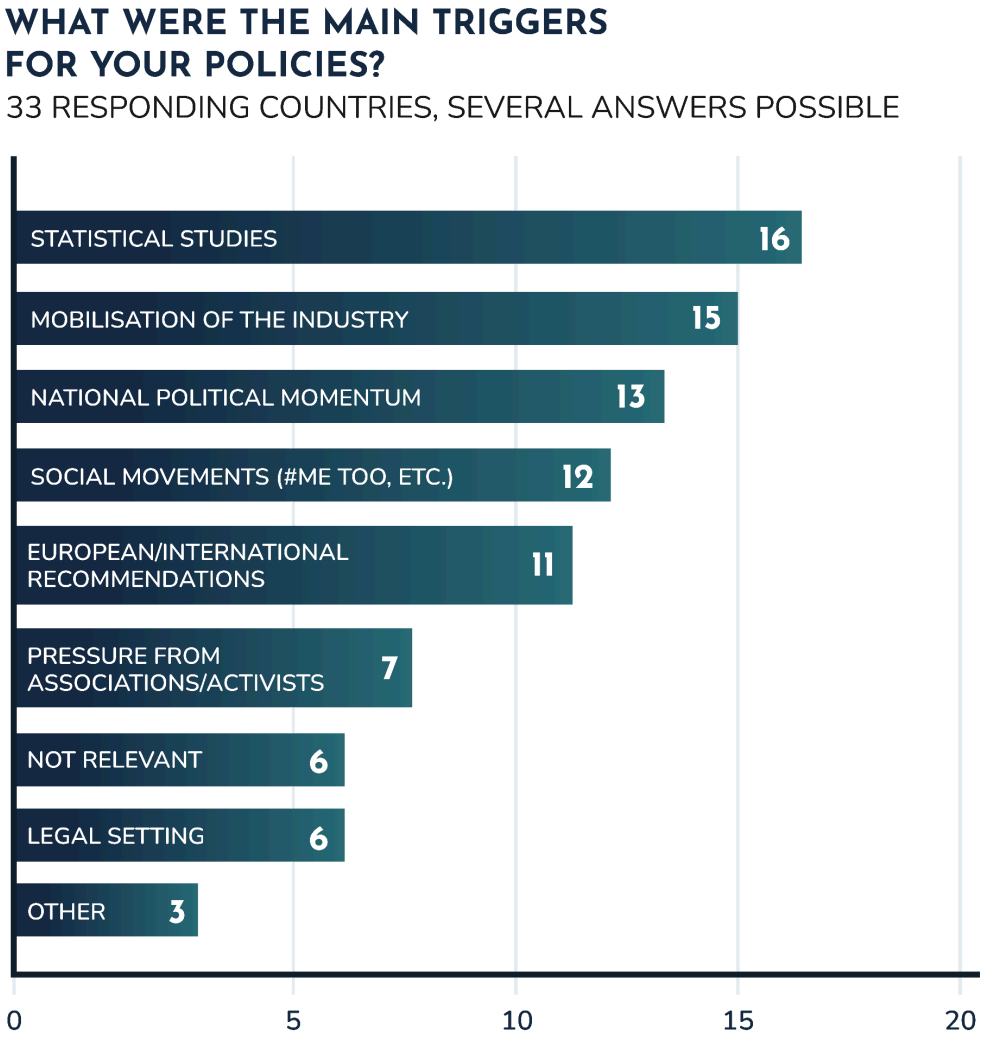
has therefore decided to revise its policy to incorporate a gender parity penalty system.

These results highlight just how much **work still needs to be done** in most European countries to achieve the goal of gender parity. Gender equality is an issue that many countries have decided to tackle, but one that is still far from being considered resolved.

II. WHAT DRIVES CHANGE, WHAT HOLDS THINGS IN PLACE

1. WHAT TRIGGERS ACTION: FIGURES, PROFESSIONALS, POLICY

National film centres consider that the main factors that triggered the introduction of public policies in favour of gender parity are, first and foremost, **statistical studies** (16 countries), closely followed by **mobilisation within the sector** (15 countries) and, finally, **national political impetus** (13 countries).



It is hardly surprising that **statistical studies** are a powerful catalyst, given that it is now well established that “women must be counted so that women count”. More

than just a catalyst highlighting existing gender gaps in the sector (*"The statistics showed that something had to be done"* - Denmark), statistical studies also help guide the choice of public policies to be implemented ("*[Our] systematic data collection has expanded the available information on women's participation in Cypriot cinema and provides a stronger evidence base for identifying inequalities and informing future policy measures.*" - Cyprus*).* A section dedicated to data collection is available in Part III.

With regard to the **mobilisation of the sector,** it is worth noting that this is cited twice as often as pressure exerted by organisations dedicated to gender equality or by activists (cited by 7 countries), illustrating just how essential it is that the call for change be driven by as many professionals as possible. We shall return to this in Part V.

However, in order to achieve such mobilisation, it is clear that **activist organisations have played a key role in raising the alarm and increasing awareness,** as demonstrated by the example of Switzerland, where *"activists have been able to build a consensus within the industry (the umbrella organisation Cinésuisse), which speaks with one voice on this issue"*. The researchers we met indeed emphasise the driving role played by feminist organisations (e.g. CIMA in Spain, FC Gloria in Austria, Collectif 50/50 and Lab Femmes de Cinéma in France, etc.). Referring to the case of Ireland, Susan Liddy, a lecturer in media and communication studies at the University of Limerick, notes that *"an eruption of grass roots activism, sparked by the '*Waking the Feminists' *campaign, prompted a challenge to the status quo and elicited a response from the leadership at Screen Ireland*" (Liddy, 2022). Sabri Derinoz, a researcher in information and communication at UCLouvain Saint-Louis Brussels, confirms that "*civil society, NGOs and individuals who come together to bring about change through a bottom-up approach constitute a vital force that has helped to bring these issues to light and are the driving forces behind change."*

With regard to national political impetus, it is noted that **many countries have introduced measures on the recommendation or at the request of the legislature or the government.** In 2016, the Austrian National Council adopted a resolution on the promotion of women in the film sector, supported by advocacy efforts from the FC Gloria association, and tasked institutions with developing measures to improve gender equality. In 2025, a committee of the French National

Assembly encouraged the CNC to introduce a gender parity penalty system, which was implemented in 2026. Most recently, in Cyprus, the National Strategy for Gender Equality 2024-2026 has provided a national framework for integrating gender perspectives across government policies and actions, including in the cultural sector.

Eleven countries also highlight the **incentive role played by international, and more specifically European, recommendations.** At the European level, a recommendation from the Committee of Ministers to member states on gender equality in the audiovisual sector was adopted in September 2017[9], calling on member states to take proactive measures in this area. North Macedonia, for example, states that *"The Agency's activities have been influenced by developments within the domestic and European film sectors, by international recommendations on gender equality, by cooperation with Eurimages, the 'Creative Europe - MEDIA' programme and European film professionals, as well as by the commitments made within the framework of the 'Generation Equality' Forum."* Austria, for its part, reveals that "*It all began with a meeting of the Eurimages working group on gender equality in 2013, during which Austrian film professionals shared their experiences of structural inequalities and sexism, thereby highlighting the need for institutional action*." The key role of the EFAD and its Gender and Inclusion Committee was also highlighted by several institutes.

Among the "other" responses was the idea that **the impetus comes from the management teams of the national film centres**, an option which was not, in fact, included in the questionnaire amongst the triggering factors but which was mentioned several times in relation to the drivers.

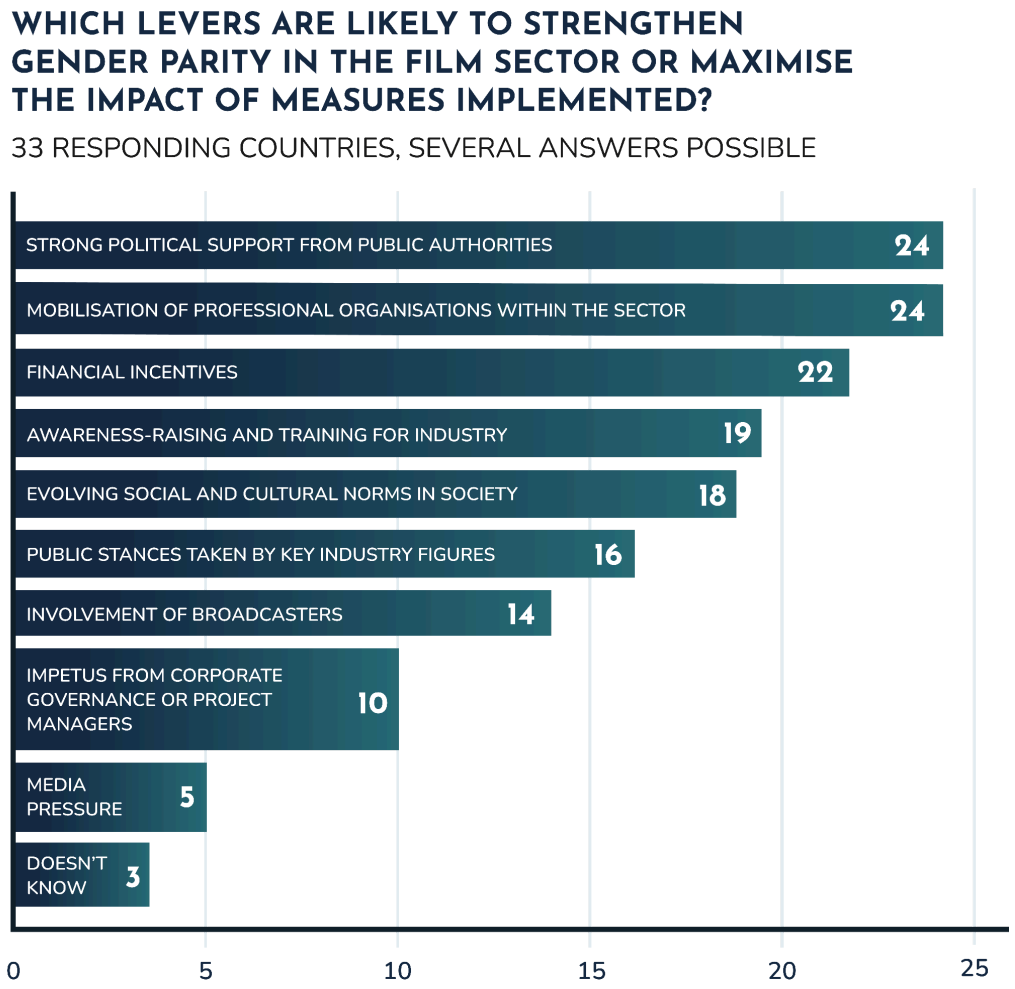
Finally, it is clear that it is often a **combination of factors** that prompts national film centres to take action, as they cite an average of 3.5 triggering factors.

[9] https://search.coe.int/cm?i=091259488022cd00

2. WHAT ACTS AS A LEVER: GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT, MOBILISATION OF PROFESSIONALS, FUNDING

Unlike 'trigger factors', which precede the implementation of measures, levers represent all the **elements likely to strengthen gender parity in the sector or the impact of measures once they have been adopted**. However, many factors are obviously common to both categories.

The national centres clearly identify **"strong political commitment from public authorities"** and the **"mobilisation of professional organisations in the sector"** (24 countries) as levers likely to strengthen gender parity in the sector. In third place are "financial incentives" (22 countries).



Whilst 13 countries considered that national political impetus had been a catalyst, **24 countries (i.e. more than two-thirds of respondents) identify a strong political commitment from public authorities as an essential lever** for strengthening gender parity in the sector. We will return to this theme throughout this study: the political climate plays a major role in the continuity, evolution and intensity of the measures put in place.

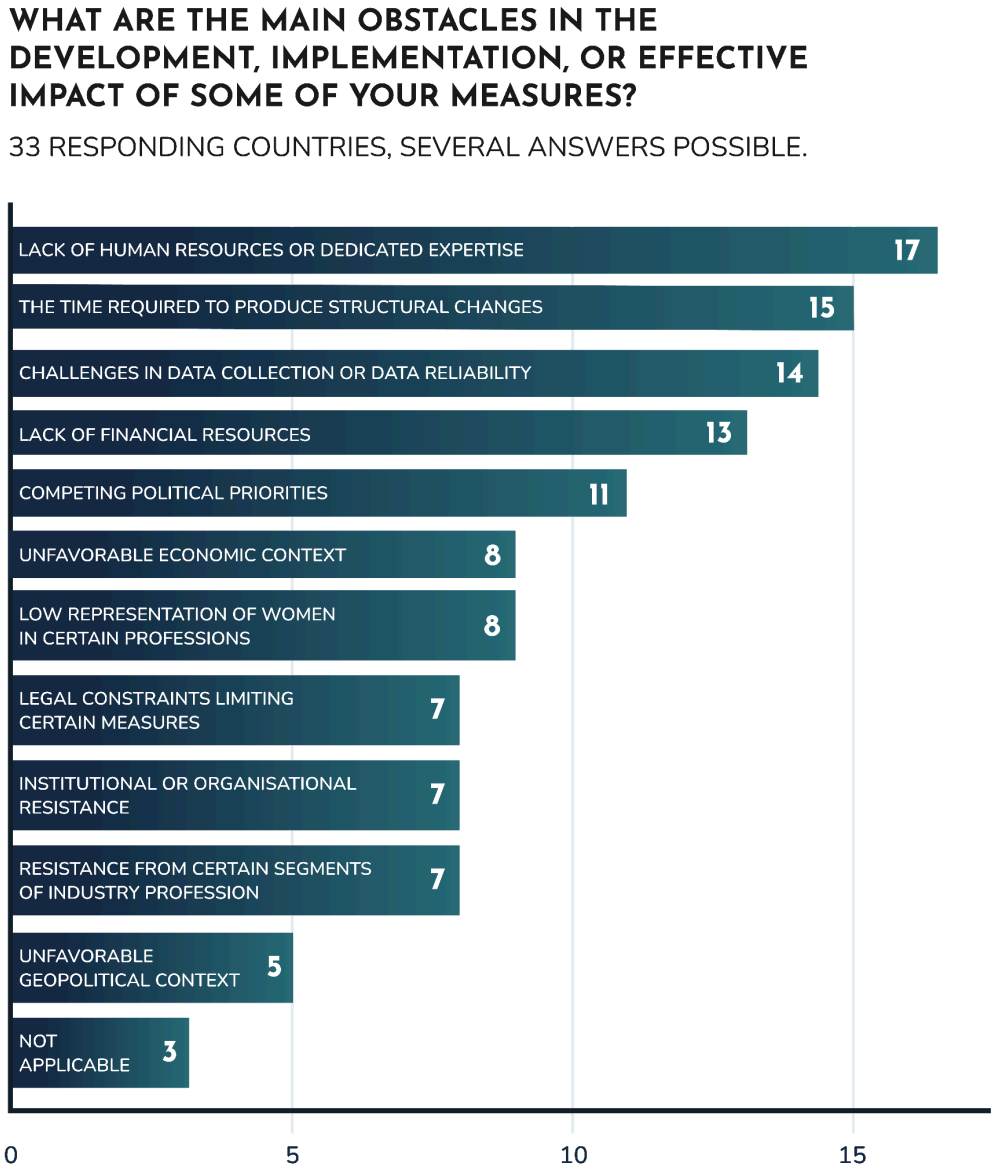
The **mobilisation of professionals, cited by 24 countries,** is also key, both to encourage transformation and to facilitate the acceptance of reforms and changes to work organisation. To ensure that gender parity and diversity targets are met, the United Kingdom emphasises: "*This effort needs to persist and to be met by a willing industry; awareness-raising and training therefore also play a key role".*

Whilst **two-thirds of the responding countries identify financial incentives** (bonuses, quotas, specific support mechanisms, making public funding conditional on equality targets) as key drivers, it is interesting to note that only just over a third report having implemented them. However, all the researchers we met identified financial levers as the essential ingredient for generating concrete results. A section dedicated to the various forms of financial levers is available in Part III.

The **"public stances taken by key stakeholders"** (16 countries) or **"the impetus provided by the management team** of a company or project" (10 countries) echo the principle of **"*transformational leaders***" - bold political and institutional figures capable of championing a strategic vision at the level of a ministry or a national film centre (as exemplified by the pioneering reforms led by Anna Serner in Sweden in the mid-2010s). Sara Cuenca, a Spanish sociologist specialising in gender inequalities, and Finland confirm that the proactive approach of public officials is key. Susan Liddy emphasises that this requires "*bold and visionary"* management to achieve this key objective (Liddy, 2022).

3. OBSTACLES: LACK OF RESOURCES, LENGTHY PROCESSES, INCOMPLETE DATA

In response to the question “What are the main obstacles to the development, implementation or actual impact of some of your measures?”, national film centres cited first and foremost the **“lack of human resources or dedicated expertise**” (17 countries, representing over 50 % of respondents), followed by the **“time required to bring about change**” (15 countries) and, finally, “**the difficulty in collecting data or ensuring its reliability**” (14 countries).



The lack of human resources (17 countries) and financial resources (13 countries) to carry out this task is therefore among the main obstacles identified. One might wonder about the reasons behind this lack of resources: is it the result of a political choice? A strategic choice? An unfavourable economic climate (mentioned by 8 countries)? A form of resignation to the *status quo?* Maria Jansson, Professor of Gender Studies at Örebro University (Sweden), warns: "*from the industry's perspective, the scarcity of financial resources seems to justify maintaining these organisational principles which constitute indirect discrimination against women*", even though measures can be put in place without requiring additional resources (e.g. incorporating a criterion relating to the composition of project teams into the allocation of grants).

The **time required to bring about change,** mentioned by 15 countries, is a reality, given how slow change appears to be. However, is this inevitable? And, above all, can this be regarded as an obstacle? Indeed, Susan Liddy, an Irish researcher, warns against the risk of associating the slow pace of change with a defeatist attitude that would prevent any action: *"The acceptance by some that it will take many years to change the culture could be interpreted as an almost defeatist acceptance of existing structures and an inevitable continuity of a cycle of exclusion and marginalisation*" (Liddy, 2022).

Data collection issues also appear to be a barrier for 14 countries, often for legal reasons (see Part III).

Competing policy priorities, cited by 11 countries, constitute the fifth most frequently cited obstacle. For further information, see Part V.

"Organisational or institutional resistance" and **"resistance from some professionals in the sector"** are mentioned by 7 countries respectively. Some countries emphasise the importance of dialogue with professionals to overcome some of these obstacles. This is indeed an area to which the researchers we consulted are particularly attentive and keen to obtain further data. According to Chloé Delaporte, Professor of Film and Audiovisual Studies at the University of Montpellier Paul-Valéry (France), research should be carried out in the coming years to provide a more objective analysis of these forms of resistance and barriers, in order to identify what is truly hindering public policies and their impact.

III. THE TOOLKIT: WHAT HAS BEEN TRIED, WHAT WORKS

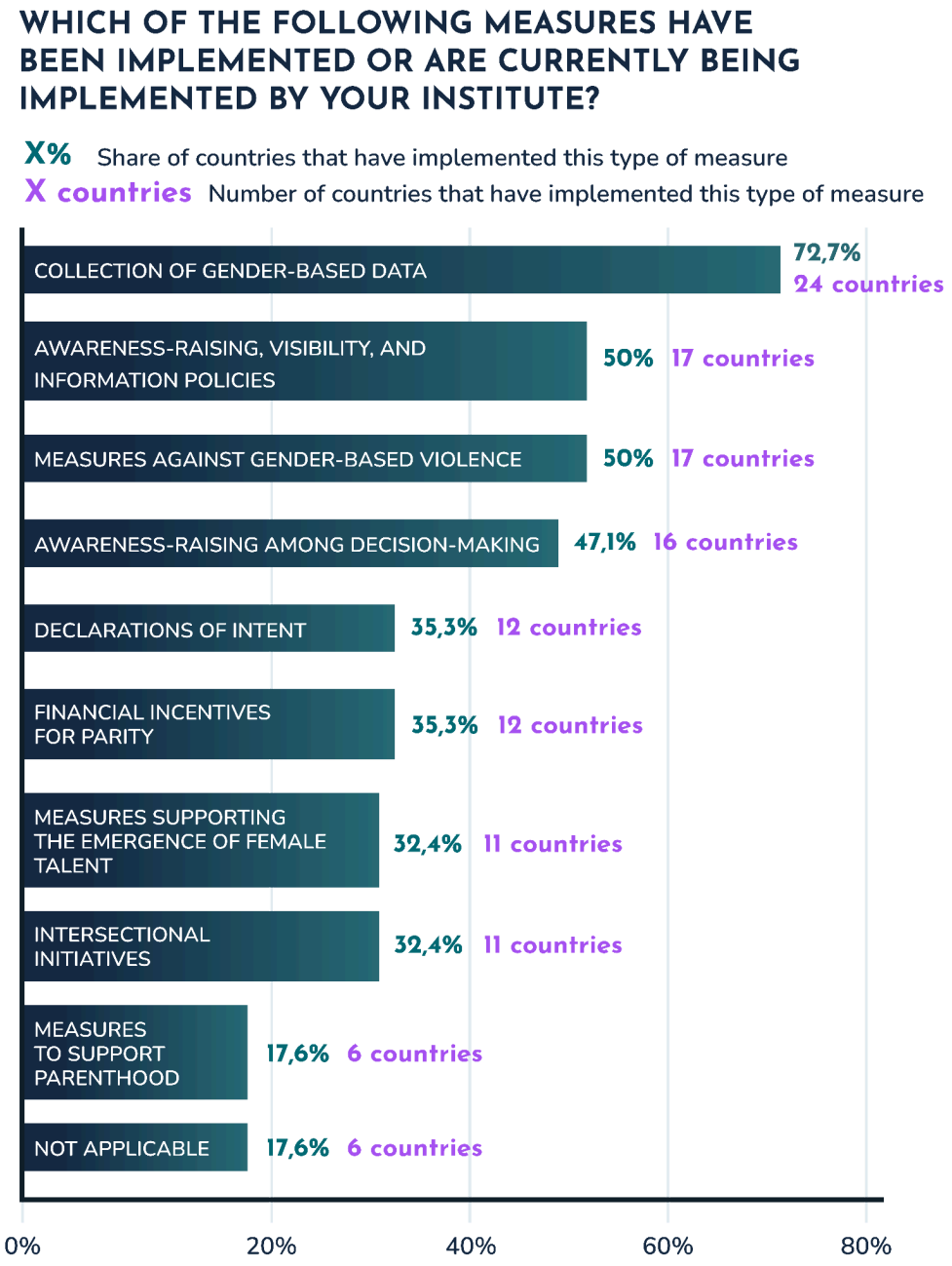
In this section, we will examine the main types of measures aimed at promoting gender parity that film institutes have adopted. As well as gathering feedback from national film centres on their measures and results, we asked the researchers involved which measures they considered most effective in bringing about change.

1. AN OVERVIEW OF THE MEASURES IMPLEMENTED AND THOSE DEEMED MOST EFFECTIVE BY THE FILM INSTITUTES

a. The most commonly implemented measures: data collection, awareness-raising and combating violence top the list

We asked the national centres to tell us the types of measures they had put in place. In terms of methodology, this refers to their own statements and what they identify as the measures they have adopted and rolled out.

Data collection is the measure reported by the largest number of countries (24 countries, or nearly 73% of those surveyed). Next come two areas of action, each cited by 17 countries, or half of the countries surveyed: on the one hand, **policies on awareness-raising, visibility and information** (e.g. promoting female directors, the institute's communications regarding its policies on gender parity and combating discrimination, etc.), and on the other hand, **measures against gender-based and sexual violence and harassment** (e.g. training, designated points of contact, support conditional on a prevention scheme, etc.).



It is worth noting that these results reinforce the idea that **data collection and awareness-raising** are amongst the first measures generally adopted, no doubt because they are usually the simplest to implement. Should we not view them as prerequisites for action in favour of gender equality rather than genuine measures capable of bringing about profound change?

For details of the measures implemented by each country, please refer to the study by the Lab Femmes de Cinéma published in 2025[10], which provides a detailed and comprehensive country-by-country overview. To mark this anniversary edition of our study, we have chosen not to update this inventory of measures and to focus instead on a review of the past ten years.

b. The measures deemed most effective: counting and funding

We also asked the film institutes which measure they considered to be the most effective or innovative. Out of 33 responding countries, 10 were unable to name one: 5 stated that they had no specific measures or that the question did not apply to them, 3 did not reply and 2 did not feel able to assess the impact of their actions.

The following table therefore focuses on the 23 institutes that cited at least one measure. Some countries cited several.

COUNTRY	MEASURES CONSIDERED MOST EFFECTIVE AND/OR INNOVATIVE	TYPE OF MEASURE[11]
Albania National Cinematography Centre	•Grants and training programmes for women in the industry.	Measures to support the emergence of female talent
Austria ÖFI	•'Gender Budgeting': a flexible quota for gender parity in funding. •'Gender Incentive': financial incentive for gender-balanced teams. •'Austrian Film Gender Report': a report based on data from 11 funding bodies. •'Inclusion Check': mandatory self-assessment by applicants and evaluation by independent experts.	Financial incentives for gender parity Gender-disaggregated data collection Raising awareness amongst decision-making bodies
Cyprus Cyprus Cinema Office	•Cinema Office's gender-monitoring questionnaires and its dedicated research documenting women film directors and other film professionals.	Gender-based data collection
Croatia Croatian Audiovisual Centre	•Code of ethical conduct for the audiovisual sector, with zero tolerance for inappropriate behaviour.	Measures against sexual harassment and sexual assault

[10] https://femmesdecinema.org/etude-2025/

[11] The classification into categories of measures is an interpretation by the study team.

Estonia Estonian Film Institute	•Gender parity on selection committees. •Mentoring and development workshops for projects led by female directors and producers.	Raising awareness amongst decision-making bodies Measures to support the emergence of female talent
Finland Finnish Film Foundation	•Open communication, clear objectives and comprehensive statistics. •Mandatory equality and non-discrimination plan for productions.	Declarations of intent Gender-disaggregated data collection
Flemish Belgium Flanders Audiovisual Fund	•Gender equality grant, which became an inclusion grant in 2026. •LEF training programme (leadership, communication, networking), followed by LEV (mixed profiles, open to the video games sector).	Financial incentives for gender parity Measures to support the emergence of female talent
France Centre national du Cinéma	•Training for company directors, followed by film crews.	Measures against sexual harassment and sexual assault
Germany German Federal Film Board	•Gender parity on selection committees. •Gender equality bonus to encourage the formation of balanced teams. •Data collection and analysis.	Raising awareness amongst decision-makers Financial incentives for gender parity Collection of gender-disaggregated data
Greece Hellenic Film and Audiovisual Centre	•Financial incentives within the short film fund to encourage women to hold key positions.	Financial incentives to promote gender parity
Iceland Icelandic Film Centre	•Industry involvement in the development of the 2019-2030 film policy.	Declarations of intent
Italy Ministry of Culture	•National Film Education Plan: school projects on equality or gender-based violence. •Joint call for proposals with the Department for Equal Opportunities on violence against women.	Awareness-raising, visibility, information
Lithuania Lithuanian Film Centre	•Development and implementation of recommendations.	Declarations of intent
Malta Malta Film Commission	•Collection of gender-disaggregated data, to become mandatory by the end of the year.	Gender-based data collection
Montenegro Film Centre of Montenegro	•Gender parity in decision-making bodies. •Film Centre training programmes: encouraging female filmmakers to submit their projects.	Raising awareness amongst decision-making bodies Measures to support the emergence of female talent
North Macedonia North Macedonia Film Agency	•”SNOWE 3” project to build a network of female film directors (2016).	Awareness-raising, visibility, information

	•Panel on equality at the Eurimages Governing Board meeting (2017). •Commitment to gender-disaggregated data and the assessment of inequalities (2021).	Collection of gender-disaggregated data
Norway Norwegian Film Institute	•Maintaining moderate quotas in the relevant schemes. •Measures to support the development of female talent.	Financial incentives to promote gender parity Measures to promote the emergence of female talent
Poland Polish Film Institute	•Support for two conferences and several festivals dedicated to women's work in cinema.	Awareness-raising, visibility, information
Slovenia Slovenian Film Centre	Four combined measures: •Raising awareness amongst decision-makers. •Collection of gender-disaggregated data. •Visibility and information policies. •Support for debut films.	Raising awareness amongst decision-makers Collection of gender-disaggregated data Awareness-raising, visibility and information Measures to promote emerging female talent
Spain Instituto de la Cinematografía y de las Artes Audiovisuales	•Specific provisions to ensure women's participation in all funding schemes. •35-40% of the budget for feature film production funding is set aside for female directors.	Financial incentives to promote gender parity
Sweden Swedish Film Institute	•Ongoing monitoring of gender distribution in key positions.	Gender-based data collection
Switzerland Federal Office of Culture	•Bonus points for films directed by women under the selective support scheme for minority co-productions.	Financial incentives to promote gender parity
United Kingdom British Film Institute	•Inclusion targets, monitoring of equality data and 'Diversity Standards' establishing a benchmark.	Declarations of intent Gender-disaggregated data collection Intersectional initiatives

It appears that **gender-disaggregated data collection** is once again the most frequently cited type of measure, mentioned by 9 out of 23 countries (39%), but this is far fewer than the number of countries that have actually implemented it (24 countries): countries therefore present it less as an effective measure than as the foundation for guiding and evaluating other measures. Conversely, **financial support for gender parity** (bonuses, incentives, quotas) comes in second place,

cited by 7 institutions (30%): **nearly 60% of the countries that have implemented it (58% to be precise, out of 12 countries) confirm the effectiveness of this financial incentive. Measures to promote the emergence of female talent** are cited by 6 institutions (26%). Raising awareness amongst decision-making bodies, particularly through gender parity on selection committees, is cited by 5 countries (22%). Awareness-raising, visibility and information campaigns are cited by 4 countries (17%), as are declarations of intent (4 countries, 17%). Intersectional initiatives (Flemish Belgium, the United Kingdom) and measures against gender-based and sexual violence and harassment (Croatia, France) were each cited by only two countries, and no country mentioned measures to support parenthood.

2. DATA COLLECTION: AN ESSENTIAL BUT INSUFFICIENT MEASURE

a. Data collection: the first step towards concrete measures

Amongst all the measures identified at European level, **the collection and publication of gender-disaggregated data is the most widely implemented measure**: over 70% of national film institutes (i.e. 24 out of 33 agencies) report having established statistical monitoring. This is something to be pleased about, as 10 years ago there was virtually no data available in Europe. In 2025, it was noted that no fewer than 10 countries had just launched, or were set to launch in the coming years, their first gender-disaggregated data collection. It should be noted that some countries which report not having put any measures in place nevertheless stated that they collect gender-disaggregated data, a sign that data collection is not always considered a measure in its own right; we shall return to this point. **It is nevertheless a cause for concern that a large number of European countries (nearly 30%) do not carry out any statistical studies relating to gender.**

In fact, this data collection is essential for several reasons.

The history of equality policies shows that the production of evidence is a prerequisite for any institutional awareness. By objectively quantifying the extent of the imbalances, statistical studies are cited by film institutes as the **primary catalyst for public action** (cited by **16 countries**), ahead of professional mobilisation or national political impetus. Gender-based studies help to move

beyond denial or intuitive feelings, placing gender equality on the political agenda and establishing a baseline to guide future reforms.

The data then acts as a vehicle to **support the formulation of public policy**. Cyprus, for example, has developed several initiatives (a questionnaire for producers and a separate research project), which "*aim to improve visibility, identify gender inequalities and provide evidence to inform future policy development in the audiovisual sector*". The Gender Equity Policy (GEP) Project[12] confirms this: "*Data and evidence play a significant role in both documenting and driving change. Data and evidence influence how gender equity is understood as a problem and how policies attempt to address it*."

Data collection therefore acts as an **essential prerequisite** prior to implementing measures for gender parity. It also acts as a **key evaluation tool at a later stage** - we shall return to this in Part IV.

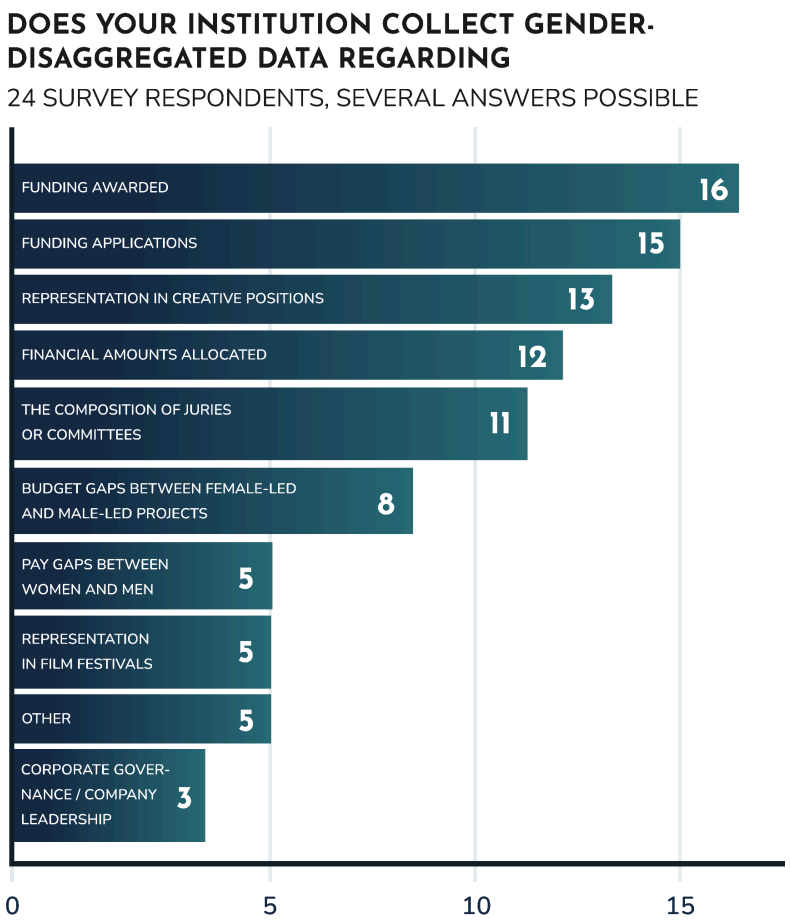
However, simply counting is not enough. The next step is to implement measures capable of bringing about tangible change. Increased awareness can put an issue on the agenda and locate 'a language for describing and questioning' (Wahl et al. 2003); however, awareness does not necessarily result in action or change. As Skadi Loist, Associate Professor of Film Studies at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU), points out, even if producers or institutions become aware of the reality of the figures, it takes a significant effort to take action. Our study can only encourage those who are currently at the counting stage not to stop there.

b. The data we track, the data that's missing

We asked film institutes what types of gender-related data they produced. Of the 33 respondents, 8 considered that this question did not apply to them, as they did not collect such data, and one country was unsure of the answer. The following table therefore focuses on the 24 countries that confirmed they collect data. Amongst these, it appears that monitoring is particularly common when it relates to **the allocation of funding**: the calculation of the proportion of women amongst

[12] This is a comparative analysis designed, in particular, to assess the factors driving the effectiveness of public policies promoting gender equality and the impact of network dynamics. It was carried out between 2021 and 2024 in three countries (Germany, Canada and the United Kingdom), under the direction of Skadi Loist. The final report is entitled "Re-Framing the Picture". https://www.filmuniversitaet.de/en/article/detail/gender-equity-policy-gep-analysis

submitted projects is cited by 15 countries, that amongst supported projects is cited by 19 countries, and the calculation of the proportion of women in the distribution of allocated funding is cited by 14 countries. The **representation of women in key roles** (*above-the-line*), for example in directing, screenwriting, in production or even as director of photography, is also tracked by 15 countries.



Amongst other data tracked, which were not included in the questionnaire, the institutes mention, for example: the proportion of awards won by women, representation within film crews, representation on screen, representation in leading roles, and representation within the institution's governance.

It is nevertheless apparent that **certain quantitative data are still collected too infrequently, even though they are extremely relevant for shedding light on the inequalities at play**: the pay gap between women and men in the various film professions (*Gender Pay Gap,* reported by only 5 countries), and the budget gaps

between those allocated to projects directed by women and those directed by men (cited by only 8 countries). Several researchers also regret the lack of data on the representation of women in film crews, particularly in roles other than key positions (*below-the-line*), fearing that the focus on key positions -and on female directors in particular- may obscure the persistence of inequalities at all other hierarchical levels within a project. Building on the work carried out by Skadi Loist et al. in three countries (Germany, the United Kingdom and Canada), they suggest that networking dynamics could also be studied across all departments. Similarly, data on career drop-out (the '*leaky pipeline*') is scarce; indeed, the most recent European figures tracking women's progression from leaving education throughout their careers date back to the Lab's study published in 2019! It would be useful to identify and monitor the proportion of female directors at each stage of a career (leaving education, short film, first feature, second feature, third and subsequent films). Finally, other researchers highlight the lack of intersectional data, which would shed light on the exclusion faced by under-represented groups.

The interviews conducted with researchers also highlight the **limitations of an exclusively quantitative approach to gender inequalities**. They call for a more systematic collection of **qualitative data,** for example on working conditions and the organisation of work -which are structurally unbalanced- but also on the impact of parenthood on careers, on professionals' resistance to measures, and on intersectional experiences. This can be achieved through interviews but also, as Chloé Delaporte (Professor of Film and Audiovisual Studies at the University of Montpellier Paul-Valéry) points out, through the observation of power relations, behaviours and the organisation of work in the field. Maria Jansson, Professor of Gender Studies at Örebro University, cites the example of "*feminist production studies*" in the United States, where researchers observe film sets and conduct interviews there. Sweden, for example, published in 2020 the findings of a qualitative study (*Which Women?*[13]) examining how age and ethno-racial background affect women's working conditions in the Swedish audiovisual industry.

We can only encourage institutions, researchers and organisations to shed light on these grey areas in order to devise even more appropriate public policies and monitor the changes in these indicators.

13 https://www.filminstitutet.se/globalassets/2.-fa-kunskap-om-film/analys-och-statistik/publications/other-publications/which-women---gender-equality-report-19-20.pdf

c. The limitations of data collection

Despite the widespread roll-out of data collection across Europe, **42% of responding organisations (from 14 countries)** identify **"difficulties with data collection or reliability" as a major obstacle or challenge** in implementing their measures. Respondents highlight two main obstacles:

- **Legal and regulatory constraints:** National frameworks on personal data protection and strict anonymity requirements sometimes restrict the institutes' ability to cross-reference data or collect information on gender identity, socio-cultural background, ethno-racial background or disability.
- **A lack of human and financial resources:** Processing granular data involves a workload that small agencies may find prohibitive.

To overcome issues relating to workload or anonymity, some organisations have been able to modernise their data collection systems using digital tools for anonymised self-reporting and monitoring. In Germany, the adoption of the OMNI data collection tool[14] provides a unified framework for anonymised data collection to assess diversity beyond gender alone, which Austria is now also looking to adopt. In early 2026, Flanders launched the new digital platform My VAF, which allows applicants for funding to confidentially update their data relating to gender, disability and background. The DIAMOND tool, meanwhile, is used by numerous stakeholders, notably broadcasters, in the United Kingdom.

3. FUNDING: FROM CARROTS TO STICKS - MONEY AS A DRIVER OF PARITY

a. Money as the lifeblood of the industry: a consensus amongst experts and institutes

Amongst all public policy instruments, **financial incentives are unanimously described by researchers and institutes as the most decisive lever for changing the representation of women in cinema**. In the survey of European film institutes, **22 countries (representing 67% of respondents) identified financial**

[14] OMNI Inclusion Data: A project by the MOIN Film Fund and The Everyone Project platform, which offers a standardised, GDPR-compliant online survey to collect data on diversity (gender, disability, ethnicity, etc.) within film crews.

incentives as a priority lever for maximising the impact of their policies. For the French Professor Chloé Delaporte, "*it's the purse strings that need to be tightened: money remains the sinews of war*". As summarised in the GEP Project led by Skadi Loist, the budget and funding mechanisms constitute "*an important, if not the most important, lever for gender equity"*. This study indicates that public funding instruments incorporating compliance mechanisms, such as the BFI Diversity Standards, have a positive impact on the representation of women in key creative positions: if a film is funded by the BFI (United Kingdom), the proportion of key roles held by women is 34%, compared with 20% for films that do not receive public support (Loist et al., 2024). Spain unequivocally confirms this conclusion: "*General declarations of support for equality are useful, but the greatest impact comes when equality criteria form part of the rules governing access to public resources*" (The Instituto de la Cinematografía y de las Artes Audiovisuales, ICAA).

However, whilst there is consensus on the principle, its practical implementation in the form of formalised mechanisms (bonuses, quotas, conditionality) currently applies to **only around one-third of the institutes** (36%, i.e. 12 countries). This disparity reflects the political trade-offs required to directly influence the allocation of public funding. It is a **lever that public authorities can, and indeed should, activate once they have a system of public support** for development or production, as the majority of researchers emphasised in the interviews. According to Doris Eikhof, Professor of Cultural Economy & Policy at the University of Glasgow, the UK public bodies, including those that award public funding, have a "*proactive duty*" to improve inclusion. This duty allows them to attach conditions to the use of public funding (e.g. diversity targets) that go beyond the general legal obligations that, e.g., a privately owned production company has to comply with.

This **lever is even widely supported by some professionals**, as demonstrated by the case of Ireland, where researcher Susan Liddy conducted a preliminary study prior to the implementation of policies in the country. According to her, "*the vast majority of interviewees argued for financial incentives and more extensive and systemic supports to be put in place to ensure that the onus did not fall unduly on individual organisations.*" (Liddy, 2022).

b. A variety of financial mechanisms: from bonuses to targeted quotas

A comparative analysis of European policies reveals a wide variety of financial mechanisms, ranging from positive incentives to reserved quotas.

Examples include systems of **conditional funding**, such as the *Diversity Standards* introduced by the United Kingdom in 2016. Compliance with these diversity standards is a condition for accessing all public funds allocated by the UK institution.

Incentives may also take the form of **financial bonuses or bonus points** aimed at encouraging gender parity in film crews. Projects wishing to benefit from this type of bonus must generally ensure that a certain number of women hold key positions. These measures have proved particularly effective, as demonstrated by the example of Switzerland, where the 'gender bonus', which involves awarding an extra 5 points to films directed by women under the selective support scheme for minority co-productions, has had a significant impact: *"As 5 points can be decisive, we quickly achieved gender parity not only in the funding awarded but also in the applications received."* Norway has also introduced a financial bonus under the Market Scheme[15] for films with at least 25% of key creative roles held by people from minority backgrounds (director, producer, screenwriter or lead actors). As this measure has been particularly effective in gender issues, it encouraged Norway to extend it to cover diversity. Flanders followed suit, expanding its "Gender Incentive Grant" in 2026 to become an "Inclusion Incentive Grant, to support emerging talent on their first and second feature films. Finally, the example of France, which introduced a bonus scheme in 2019, raises the question of what is most effective: **incentive or financial compulsion.**

FOCUS - GENDER PARITY BONUS/PENALTY: THE UNPRECEDENTED PARADIGM SHIFT AT THE FRENCH CNC[16]

The French experience illustrates the trajectory of a public policy facing a ceiling on the effectiveness of its incentives. In 2019, the CNC, in consultation with the *Collectif 50/50*, created a **14% gender parity bonus**[17] granted as automatic

[15] https://www.nfi.no/nyheter/dette-er-endringene-i-markedsordningen

[16] https://www.cnc.fr/professionnels/actualites/le-cnc-fait-evoluer-sa-mesure-en-faveur-de-la-parite-dans-les-equipes-de-films-vers-un--bonusmalus_2628680

[17] https://collectif5050.com/bonus-parite/

funding for films in which the key management roles were held by women. Between 2021 and 2024, more than a third of approved films were eligible for this incentive.

However, the reports published by the CNC Observatory[18] revealed a **slowdown in momentum**: a decline in the proportion of films eligible for the bonus (33.5% in 2025 compared with 39.9% in 2023) and a fall in the proportion of female directors amongst approved works (24% in 2024, its lowest level since 2019). Recognising that financial incentives alone were no longer sufficient to influence projects -particularly big-budget ones- the CNC announced the creation of a **gender parity penalty**, which will come into force in early 2027.

In practical terms, for films entering production on or after 1 January 2027, a 10% surcharge on the funding invested by each production company will apply to film productions that have employed **at least 40% women in management roles**. Conversely, productions that fail to meet a minimum proportion of women within their production teams will see the funding they receive reduced by 10%.

The gender parity penalty and its corresponding bonus measure represent a paradigm shift: productions that achieve gender parity may be rewarded, but those that achieve gender parity will be penalised.

This shift towards financial incentives marks a major turning point in Europe:

- **A dual approach (reward/penalty)** : Productions with gender parity will continue to be promoted, whilst those without will face financial reductions in their automatic funding.
- **A jointly developed requirement**: it has been developed in line with the sector's collective agreements and negotiated with the social partners.
- **The decision to remain focused on positions of responsibility**, as this creates a virtuous circle regarding the composition of the rest of the teams and the working atmosphere.

18 https://www.cnc.fr/a-propos-du-cnc/etudes-et-rapports/bilans/parite-et-lutte-contre-les-vhss--bilan-2024-des-engagements-du-cnc_2309899

- **Addressing the asymmetry in the film industry**: whilst big-budget films might be able to choose to forgo a bonus, it may be more difficult for them to absorb a financial penalty.
- A **progressive threshold to be phased in between 2027 and 2030** to allow producers to gradually adapt their teams. The minimum number of key roles that must be filled by women will increase in stages.

Finally, across Europe, there are **various quota systems, some more flexible than others**.

Spain is currently the only country to have genuinely implemented firm quotas by systematically allocating a portion of its budget to fund projects led by female directors or screenwriters.

FOCUS - SPAIN, A PIONEER IN FIRM QUOTAS

The Spanish model essentially combines two measures:

- **Positive scoring criteria**: First, ICAA production support schemes award additional points for the participation of women in key creative and technical positions. The purpose is to encourage producers to incorporate women not only in directing or screenwriting but also in positions in which female participation has traditionally been particularly low.
- **Budgetary reservations:** part of the budget of the main feature-film production schemes is reserved for projects directed exclusively by women. At least 35% of the General Support Scheme budget is reserved for projects directed exclusively by women. In the Selective Support Scheme, the reservation is higher: in 2025 at least 40% of the budget was reserved for projects directed exclusively by women.

The ICAA emphasises:

- **The rationale behind combining the two mechanisms is important.** Scoring criteria encourage female participation throughout the production

structure, whereas budgetary reservations guarantee that a significant proportion of public resources effectively reaches films led by women.

- A **progressive scheme**: the proportion reserved for films directed by women has risen from 20% in 2020 to 35% from 2022 onwards.
- **Extending this policy to other stages of the creative process**: The policy has recently been extended further upstream in the creative process. When ICAA reinstated its support scheme for screenwriting in 2025, after fourteen years without a call, 45% of the budget was reserved for screenplays written exclusively by women. This is particularly relevant because equality policies should not begin only when a film reaches the production stage. Supporting women at the screenwriting and development stage can strengthen the pipeline of projects that may subsequently reach production.
- The **convincing results of these measures**: The proportion of Spanish feature films with female participation in directing or screenwriting increased from 35.5% in 2021 to 46.5% in 2024. Films directed exclusively by women represented 16.5% in 2021 and 26.1% in 2024. According to the Association of Women Filmmakers and Audiovisual Media (CIMA)'s latest Annual Report, covering the evolution of Spanish feature films between 2015 and 2024, women represented 26% of professionals in 2015 and 38% in 2024[19]. CIMA particularly highlights that progress accelerated during the last five years, coinciding with the reinforcement of positive-action measures and the introduction of gender-related scoring criteria in public funding. This is a sign that the growing presence of women in key roles is having an impact on the composition of teams in general.

Spain nevertheless emphasises that the budget gap between projects led by men and those led by women (24% lower on average, according to CIMA) remains a challenge, and reducing it is a priority for the coming years. The 35% earmarked allocation within the General Support Scheme is all the more crucial as this

19 https://cimamujerescineastas.es/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/25_INFORME-ANUAL-CIMA-2024.pdf

scheme is designed for projects with a stronger industrial dimension and larger budgets and therefore helps women-led projects gain access not only to public support, but to the segment of production associated with greater financing capacity.

Other countries have opted for the creation of **"moderate or hybrid" quotas,** for example by prioritising projects of equal quality based on the gender of the person in key roles, or by setting targets rather than strict quotas.

Norway, for instance, has been applying **so-called 'moderate' quotas**[20] in certain funding schemes for around twenty years. Where a project led by a man and one led by a woman are of equal artistic merit, the Norwegian institute's selection committee *may* support the project led by a woman. The share of women among key roles (producer/director/screenwriter) receiving production grants has stayed fairly stable - averaging 48% over 2020-2024, compared to 42% among applicants.

By the end of 2026, the Netherlands will introduce targets for the allocation of funding: at least half of all development funding awarded, across all categories, must be awarded to films whose creative team (screenwriter, director, producer) comprises at least two-thirds women. This target also applies to production grants. The Netherlands states that if it fails to meet these two targets, it will consider introducing a quota.

FOCUS - AUSTRIA IS IMPLEMENTING SEVERAL FINANCIAL MEASURES IN PARALLEL

Like Spain, Austria also combines several support mechanisms to promote gender parity:

- Firstly, a scheme encouraging the employment of women in production teams: since 2019, the Gender Incentive[21] has provided an automatic grant of €30,000 (with a 10% top-up in the event of commercial or artistic success), conditional on a points-based system linked to the presence of

[20] https://www.nfi.no/en/news/nfi-awards-production-grants-with-50-percent-female-share-in-2024

[21] https://filminstitut.at/en/application-manager/gender-incentive

women in key roles within the departments of production, screenwriting, directing, production management, film and sound editing, music, colour grading, lighting, VFX…

- A second initiative focuses on the allocation of funding within the Institute: since 2021, *Gender Budgeting*[22] - a flexible quota system aimed at achieving gender parity in funding allocation- has aimed to achieve parity in the allocation of funding (50-50, with a margin of ±3%), taking into account roles in directing, screenwriting and production. This applies to support for screenwriting, development and production. Quality remains the primary criterion. If parity is not achieved in a given year, the Institute carries out an analysis to understand the causes.

As for the Gender Incentive, it is a scheme that is:

- **Easy to implement** according to Austria, and one that has **quickly gained traction amongst professionals.**
- **Successful**: in 13 of the 18 departments covered by the Gender Incentive, there has been a notable increase in the proportion of female professionals[23]. **In 2025, Austria was the country with the highest proportion of films directed by women** (52% according to the EAO).
- **Adaptable**: in 2023, the *Gender Incentive* was extended to 18 departments and is subject to regular review. Few changes have been observed in certain departments (e.g. cinematography), so the number of points awarded when a woman holds the post has been increased.
- **Long-term**: results are not always immediate and must be viewed over the long term.

These schemes are cited as a source of inspiration for other European countries.

[22] https://filminstitut.at/en/gender-diversity-inclusion/gender-budgeting

[23] https://filminstitut.at/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Third_Austrian_Film_Gender_Report_Shortened_Version_Web_EN.pdf

An unprecedented measure was introduced in 2023: the **launch of specific calls for proposals for films directed by women**. To date, Montenegro is the only country to have offered this type of financial incentive. The Film Centre of Montenegro announced the creation of two specific calls for projects for films directed by women, with funding of up to €100,000 for selected projects.

Finally, another way of encouraging professionals to develop projects with a focus on gender parity and diversity is to make this **a criterion that can influence the decisions of selection committees.** In Norway, since 2022, it has been compulsory for all applicants for development or production support to complete a self-assessment questionnaire; this forces the industry to reflect on its practices and may, at the discretion of the committees, serve as a deciding factor in the event of a dilemma regarding the allocation of funding. A similar system is being introduced by Austria in 2024, to complement the (*Inclusion Check*[24]), which since 2017 has required all screenplays to be assessed by experts against standardised diversity criteria, thereby helping to improve representation on screen. All participants were keen to emphasise one absolute constant: **artistic quality is the primary selection criterion** ("*Quality is everything*").

Beyond the variety of formats that financial support can take, **a range of criteria can also be considered.** Whilst most schemes focus on the presence of women in key roles, the roles taken into account may vary in terms of diversity. Furthermore, some incentives incorporate criteria relating to on-screen representation, such as the UK's *Diversity Standards*.

There is therefore no single or magic formula, but all forms of financial support for the sector are approaches that have proven their worth and deliver tangible results.

4. PROTECTING: COMBATING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE - ANOTHER KEY TO ACHIEVING PARITY

Combating sexist and sexual violence and harassment (GBSV) has become a major issue in the film industry, particularly in the wake of the #MeToo movement[25]. **51%**

[24] https://filminstitut.at/en/gender-diversity-inclusion/inklusions-check

[25] Emerging in 2017, first in the United States in the wake of the Harvey Weinstein scandal, and then across the world, #MeToo is a global social movement empowering women to speak out against sexist and sexual violence, harassment and abuse of power.

of respondents (from 17 countries) stated that they had put measures in place to combat GBSV (gender-based and sexual violence). More than ever, **gender parity and the fight against GBSV appear to be linked**: gender parity statistically reduces the incidence of violence, whilst combating violence helps to facilitate gender parity.

The measures put in place are **diverse, and countries are implementing all or part of a wide range of options**: the systematic use of harassment officers on film sets; the creation of charters to be signed by production companies, committing them to funding bodies; financial support for counselling services and/or prevention and support units; the promotion of the role of intimacy coordinator; the introduction of training (compulsory or optional) for producers and/or film crews; and finally, the publication online of best practices and codes of conduct, generally drawn up by professional groups, or the establishment of a confidential support service offering psychological or legal assistance (following the example of Spain's recent *Unit Against Gender-Based Violence in the Audiovisual and Cultural Sectors*[26] or the helpline run by Audiens[27], in partnership with the CNC, in France).

France has one of the most advanced policies for combating sexual and sexualised violence. What is particularly striking about the policy implemented by the CNC is the strong link between financial incentives (the conditionality of funding) and the fight against gender-based and sexual violence.

FOCUS - FRANCE LINKS THE FIGHT AGAINST SEXUAL AND SEXUALISED VIOLENCE WITH FINANCIAL INCENTIVES

Since 2021, the CNC has made its funding conditional upon compliance with **specific obligations regarding the prevention and detection of sexual harassment.** These obligations include:

- The establishment of an information scheme in the workplace,

26 https://www.academiadecine.com/unidad-de-prevencion-y-atencion-contra-las-violencias-machistas-en-el-sector-audiovisual-y-cultural/

27 https://www.violences-sexuelles-culture.org/fr/

- the appointment of a harassment liaison officer for organisations with more than 250 employees,
- the development of an internal procedure for reporting and dealing with incidents of sexual harassment,
- the provision of a support and helpline service,
- and, finally, the provision of training for employers[28], funded by the CNC.

Indeed, one of the conditions for receiving CNC grants is the completion of specific training and the obtaining of certification by the company's legal representative, who is in most cases the organisation's director. These measures aim to help professionals in the sector prevent and detect inappropriate behaviour at all stages of production and distribution (on film sets, in studios, during promotional activities, etc.).

Thus, between 2022 and 2023, completion of the training and the attainment of certification by **employers** in the film and audiovisual sectors (producers, distributors and international sales agents), the video game sector, the digital creation sector and cinema operators gradually became mandatory in order to qualify for CNC funding. This training is free of charge.

Between **2025 and 2026**, a new milestone was reached to amplify the impact of the training: CNC grants are also conditional upon the **training of film crews** in combating sexual and sexual harassment. Not only are producers and company directors trained, but the entire film crew must also be trained: the director, department heads, technical crew and actors. This applies to both feature films and other audiovisual works. This training is divided into two parts: the first, lasting 2 hours 30 minutes, is delivered remotely, followed by 2 hours 30 minutes on set.

Over the past five years, more than 25,000 professionals have been trained in this way. Over the next three years, the aim is to reach nearly 78,000 workers

[28] More information available here: https://www.cnc.fr/professionnels/actualites/le-cnc-lance-la-formation-prevenir-et-agir-contre-les-violences-sexistes-et-sexuelles_1335346

in the sector.

This training scheme for the sector, the first of its kind in the world, is based on several paradigm shifts:

- the **conditionality of funding as a lever for action** to engage the sector in an occupational health and safety approach.
- **the systemic nature of the training: training for company directors, followed by film crews, constitutes a large-scale public policy that enables a very large number of professionals in the sector to be reached**
- it is the **result of a joint effort** between the social partners, associations, various lobby groups, public authorities and training organisations.
- **mobilisation of the sector**: everyone takes responsibility and provides **the resources (particularly financial and organisational)** required to implement it.
- **Awareness within the profession, which is playing its part and doing its utmost to successfully organise training on set.**
- **Gradual expansion of the sectors and occupations covered by the training.**
- **Raising awareness and changing the working environment:** whilst training for company directors enables employers to take ownership of their responsibilities regarding the prevention and management of GBSV, it is observed that training for film crews not only serves to reinforce the code of conduct within the workplace but also creates a space for sharing that strengthens team cohesion.

As part of the ongoing fight against violence and harassment, we are also seeing the **introduction of measures to combat discrimination.** Germany aims to standardise the presence of anti-discrimination officers and anti-discrimination offices in institutions. By the end of 2026, Slovenia will be introducing ethical standards (following the example of Austria and other national film centres) for the films funded by the agency (the ethical code will address professional and decent

behaviour and communication, discrimination, disrespectful behaviour, prohibition of harassment and exclusionary behaviour, intimidation and threats of violence, sexual harassment, and children protection).

5. HALTING THE BRAIN DRAIN OF FEMALE TALENT

Where is the female talent? Are there enough women receiving training?

Are there proportionally as many women as men able to fully develop their careers? If not, why, and how can this be remedied? Some institutions are therefore developing policies to foster the emergence of talent on the one hand, and to support the sustainability of their careers on the other. It is interesting to note that the focus is not always on the same issue, which also reflects the diversity of European countries.

a. Examining the gradual disappearance of women

How can we explain the disappearance of women as their careers progress? Researchers emphasise that this is a question which is not asked often enough in most countries. However, as Sweden highlighted in 2020 in its report *Which Women?,* the industry risks losing talent and missing out on key narratives if discrimination persists: diversity represents untapped potential in the film industry. **Several reasons** were put forward during our investigation, echoing a rich body of academic literature on the subject (Prommer, Loist, 2026; Antoci, 2024).

Women do indeed face **numerous forms of discrimination** that make it more difficult for them to establish themselves in the industry in the long term: biases, of course (women are less likely to be associated with commercial or artistic success, "*Women are hired for their experience, men for their potential"* - Skadi Loist), violence that may be directed specifically at them, the dynamics of networking, as well as organisational structure and working conditions.

Research in the sociology of cinema shows that the persistence of inequalities stems in particular from the **concentration of financial power within closed production networks**. At the heart of this exclusion lies the notion of **risk aversion**, systematically invoked by economic decision-makers to justify the continued selection of the same profiles: Franklin argues that *"riskiness is often given as a*

reason to persist with the status quo" and Coles and Eikhof concur and argue that *"socially constructed perceptions of risk held by key decision-makers is central to understanding inequality in the screen industries" (Coles and Eikhof 2021, 2–3).* By implicitly associating female filmmakers and under-represented groups with a higher 'financial risk', traditional production and distribution networks perpetuate peer-to-peer co-optation and confine women to projects that present a lower financial risk. A report from Norway[29] thus observes that films receiving artistic funding (*consulentvurdert*) from NFI tend to be more diverse than those funded based on market potential (*markedsvurdert*).

Skadi Loist and the GEP Analysis research team[30] have taken a particular interest in the dynamics of networks. Their research highlights that men predominantly collaborate with other men, thereby widening disparities, and that women are just as well educated as men but do not have access to the same networks. The professional relationships forged between men at film school endure throughout their careers and have the effect of hindering the opportunities available to women (Prommer, Loist, 2026). This confirms an affinity bias, which involves hiring someone who is similar to us, points out Doris Eikhof.

Working conditions and the organisation of work are less frequently taken into account in measures to promote gender equality, points out Maria Jansson, because *"when policy directs awareness primarily to the issue of women's presence and public funding, it becomes blind to how working conditions are organised around gendered ideals, such as that of the male genius, which consequently makes it more difficult for women to fit in"*. Here again, some countries regulate working conditions more strictly than others (e.g. collective agreements), but all should raise awareness amongst producers of the following question: How have you changed the way you organise work and employment to enable everybody to access opportunity equally? Regulating working hours, *job splitting* (sharing tasks or even a post between several people to allow for an individual reduction in working hours), the presence of *awareness managers* and intimacy coordinators are all solutions

29 https://cdn.craft.cloud/0df8a7fe-ef75-40cb-9e44-53aac4ffeac2/assets/uploads/documents/Rapporter/Content-Diversity-in-Films-and-Series-Report-Summary.pdf

30 This is a comparative analysis designed, in particular, to assess the factors driving the effectiveness of public policies promoting gender equality and the impact of network dynamics. It was carried out between 2021 and 2024 in three countries (Germany, Canada and the United Kingdom), under the direction of Skadi Loist. The final report is entitled "Re-Framing the Picture". https://www.filmuniversitaet.de/en/article/detail/gender-equity-policy-gep-analysis

that encourage us to reinvent the working environment. Skadi Loist sums it up very aptly: "*Film is not supposed to be war, it is a job: the current production culture of the film industry needs to change.*" This seems all the more essential given that precarious employment statuses such as intermittent work and freelancing are factors that exacerbate inequalities. Montenegro has carried out a survey: it showed that there is a lack of female authors in feature film production (only *one* female director had fiction feature films produced in Montenegro) even though female students at Montenegrin film schools are in majority. The research showed that the main reason is "*job and financial insecurity, and personal circumstances*".

Amongst the factors that further explain the gradual disappearance of women is also **parenting,** which remains largely overlooked in public policy (see below).

b. Nurturing and sustaining female talent

How can this absence or decline be addressed? As a reminder, **11 countries** report having taken measures to foster the emergence of female talent. This may involve mentoring programmes, female talent development schemes, access opportunities, scholarship schemes or even the funding of short films directed by women. But this must also be reflected in a strong commitment on the part of film schools to increase the number of women on their training programmes. Several countries recognise that it can take time to recruit and train new talent when film schools are not already aware of the need for this approach.

Another measure worth mentioning here, one that is less well-known and deserves to be explored further, is ***shadowing.*** In the GEP Analysis Project[31] (Loist et al., 2024), *shadowing* -which involves pairing an emerging female and/or minority talent with an established professional, such as an influential male director or producer- is seen as a means of introducing talent into an established network. In the simulations carried out by the GEP Analysis Project to assess the networking dynamics at play, *shadowing* enabled female emerging talents to gain easier access to new projects, especially at a point of their career where most would otherwise leave the industry.

[31] This is a comparative analysis designed, in particular, to assess the factors driving the effectiveness of public policies promoting gender equality and the impact of network dynamics. It was carried out between 2021 and 2024 in three countries (Germany, Canada and the United Kingdom), under the direction of Skadi Loist. The final report is entitled *"Re-Framing the Picture"*.

FOCUS - UP: NORWAY BOOSTS TALENT

Norway runs the "UP" development programme for filmmakers from under-represented groups. Since 2018, directors and producers have been offered grants, professional development workshops, personalised coaching and funding. This programme stems from the recognition of a structural problem: women were stuck making short films and struggled to direct their first feature film.

The first intake is regarded as a huge success by the NFI, as 90% of the 12 female directors who benefited from UP1 went on to direct a feature film within the following three years, and one of the films was even selected for the Sundance Film Festival. Norway subsequently rolled out several UP-development programmes to cater more broadly to filmmakers from minority backgrounds.

According to the NFI, the programme thus enables:

- **the development of talent**
- a **structural shift**, as it injects dozens of confident talents into the industry
- the sending of a **clear signal** for a more equitable industry

Since then, the NFI has recruited several women who benefited from the "UP" programme as "role models", so that they can help younger generations to envisage their futures and feel confident about embarking on careers in film. These role models are set to travel across the country to raise awareness in schools.

These numerous initiatives, however necessary they may be, must go hand in hand with ensuring that talent is retained over the long term in order to realise its full potential. For, as we know, on average across Europe, women - who account for 50% of students at the leading film schools in Europe - are gradually being pushed out of the sector. In fact, they account for only 34% by the time they make a short film, 24% by the time of their first or second feature film, and 15% for their third film and beyond (Lab Femmes de Cinéma, 2019)**.** Significantly more men are active in creative leadership roles, even though the proportions in training are almost at parity

in most countries (Aylett 2016). **The problem is therefore not necessarily one of available resources, but rather the ability of female talent to build a sustainable career (*Sustainable careers*).**

Supporting women throughout their careers is therefore a key challenge for many countries. Flanders, for example, emphasises that it will be essential to continue improving the inflow of female and non-binary creators into key creative and decision-making roles, as current data show that gender disparities arise primarily at the application stage rather than during selection. This will involve continuing training programmes such as 'Leiderschap en Eigenheid in Film' (LEF). Estonia continues investing in high-level mentorships and workshops for women filmmakers and producers, helping them develop their projects into production-ready works with strong potential to secure production and distribution funding.

c. Parenting: the great oversight

In recent years, the issue of support for parents has emerged within the sector. However, **it is still rarely addressed or taken into account in the development of public policy.**

In 2026, only **six organisations** reported having implemented incentive policies aimed at supporting people with children working in the film industry. These policies are not explicitly gender-specific, but in practice, studies show that having children puts women at a greater disadvantage in the workplace[32]: supporting parents therefore effectively promotes greater equality in creative working conditions between women and men. In 2020, only two countries were addressing this issue.

The measures put in place can take various forms, the most common being the inclusion of childcare costs in grant applications, but there are also childcare arrangements on film sets or the sharing of duties amongst several people to allow for a reduction in individual working hours (*job splitting*, in Austria for example). Germany also plans "*to introduce family care and flexible shooting models as well as codes of conduct to agree on safe work environments*".

[32] https://www.haut-conseil-egalite.gouv.fr/rapport-du-plancher-collant-au-plafond-de-mere

This issue of parenthood (and particularly motherhood) cuts across all professional sectors. It is undoubtedly exacerbated in the film industry, where **working conditions are precarious and employment status is most often on a casual basis.** Maria Jansson points out, for example, that in Sweden - where gender equality in relation to parenthood is a historically well-established social issue - national schemes (such as parental leave and state-run nurseries) are of little benefit to women in the film industry because the way work is organised (irregular working hours, long periods of absence) is not compatible with these schemes.

6. BROADENING THE SCOPE: THE CHALLENGE OF INTERSECTIONALITY

a. Diversity: often the blind spot in policies promoting gender parity

It is now well established that discrimination against women is exacerbated when combined with other factors such as socio-cultural background, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic background or disability.

In the same way, the researchers we spoke to emphasise: not all women benefit equally from gender equality policies unless these policies adopt an intersectional approach. The guide "Deeds not words", developed under the auspices of Doris Eikhof, explains: "*Policies, interventions and action plans that take a "one size fits all" approach to women can end up removing some barriers to women's opportunity and inclusion but leaving other barriers in place. That makes them less effective, especially for women who face multiple forms of exclusion within film & TV.*" In other words, non-intersectional gender parity policies primarily benefit white, able-bodied women from privileged social classes. **9 countries** consider that "[their] measures for gender parity do not take sufficient account of other factors of discrimination or inequality".

The implementation of diversity policies, however, is hampered by highly varied national legal frameworks across Europe: on the one hand, ethnicity or 'race' are not discussed with the same ease in all countries, and, on the other hand, data collection can be difficult for GDPR reasons and sometimes even for constitutional reasons (in some countries, it is prohibited to compile ethnic statistics). As we know, counting is essential to ensure that under-represented

groups are considered. This can hinder not only the implementation of measures but also the ability to hold the sector to account on this issue.

b. The emergence of diversity policies: a gradual broadening of the scope of action

By 2026, 11 countries reported having implemented intersectional measures.

Whilst public policies in the European film sector historically began with the issue of gender parity, the institutional landscape reflects a growing commitment to intersectionality. This trend reflects a desire to complement the fight against gender discrimination with a broader framework encompassing ethnic and racial diversity, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, socio-economic background and age. In some cases, there has even been a shift from the concept of parity towards that of diversity, as highlighted by Susan Liddy in relation to Ireland.

At national level, measures to promote greater diversity can take various forms, ranging from multi-year action plans with quantified targets; awareness-raising training; self-assessment tools to encourage creative teams to examine the inclusivity of their projects; corrective measures (affirmative action) which, given equal quality of a project, prioritise the one that is most inclusive both in front of and behind the camera; emerging talent and mentoring programmes designed to support historically marginalised professionals; the collection of intersectional data; reimbursement of costs for workplace adaptations for people with disabilities; specialised working groups, often comprising those directly affected, which can make recommendations within the organisations…

FOCUS - THE BFI'S *DIVERSITY STANDARDS* IN THE UK: A MODEL FOR AN INTERSECTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The so-called "Diversity Standards[33]" measure, adopted in 2016, is the BFI's most significant policy as it encompasses all areas of inclusion from an intersectional perspective. To qualify for public funding from the Lottery Funding scheme (a fund linked to the BFI), a film must meet several of the following five standards:

[33] https://www.bfi.org.uk/inclusion-film-industry/bfi-diversity-standards

- Standard A - “Representation, themes and narratives on screen”: promoting diversity in characters and stories, particularly in terms of gender, racial identity, sexual orientation, disability…
- Standard B - “Creative leadership and production team”: encouraging greater diversity amongst team members (directors, screenwriters, technicians, crew, etc.)
- Standard C - “Access to the industry and opportunities”: fostering inclusion by supporting work placements, training, career progression, mentoring and the presence of mentors for under-represented groups
- Standard D - “Audience development”: making efforts to attract a more diverse audience and to meet the needs of audiences in underserved regions
- Standard E - “Accessibility”: a duty of care and inclusion on film sets, promoting in particular accessibility for people with disabilities or the creation of “safe spaces”…

This is a framework that is :

- Designed from the outset to be **intersectional:** it even includes criteria relating to regional background, socio-economic origin and career progression.
- **Quickly integrated into professionals’ practices**
- **Flexible: whilst certain criteria are mandatory, candidates have several options for meeting the eligibility requirements.**
- **Comprehensive**: it encompasses not only representation behind the camera but also in front of it, whilst also taking into account working conditions, the audience and the narratives.
- **Which enables film crews to consider these issues at the right time** - generally before production begins (with nearly 1,000 applications for development funding each year) - at a stage when there is still time to allocate a budget and time to these diversity objectives.
- **Effective**: the BFI regularly meets its funding targets in terms of gender parity for screenwriters, producers and directors. In the 2023-2024 funding

round, the feature film development fund supported 60% female screenwriters; women account for 60% of directors and 57% of producers. For the production fund, women account for 56% of screenwriters, 56% of directors and 45% of producers.

- **inspiring**: whilst it applies to a small number of films supported each year (around 12 for production grants and 20 for development grants), this scheme has been adopted well beyond the BFI (e.g. BAFTA, the BBC, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences[34]).
- **Evolving**: since their launch, the standards have evolved, for example by incorporating a new section on accessibility or by strengthening the criteria to prevent a 'bare minimum' approach and, instead, to encourage applicants to go further.

c. Two policy philosophies: holistic approaches versus targeted policies

Analysis of the questionnaire responses and interviews with researchers highlights a debate between two major strategic approaches to public policy on diversity. Should each measure be conceived as intersectional, or should specific measures be devised for under-represented groups?

On the one hand, there is a **cross-cutting and integrated approach.** Several countries favour a comprehensive approach in which gender is one parameter amongst others within a universal model of inclusion, following the example of the BFI's *Diversity Standards* or the Austrian Film Institute's *Inclusion Check*. In its 2026-2028 action plan, the VAF has thus transformed its "gender incentive grant" (*Gender Incentive Grant*) into an "inclusion incentive grant" (*Inclusion Incentive Grant*), extending financial incentives to projects that include people from migrant backgrounds or with disabilities. Chloé Delaporte recommends, for example, addressing sexism and racism in every area of application (e.g. working conditions, attitudes to parenthood or career progression).

Conversely, several researchers and professionals have expressed **reservations about a shift from gender to "diversity"', fearing that the specific issues**

34 https://www.oscars.org/news/academy-establishes-representation-and-inclusion-standards-oscarsr-eligibility

associated with each form of discrimination will be diluted if clear objectives are not defined. The anti-racist collective Piment, moreover, deplores the use of the term 'diversity' precisely because of its 'all-encompassing' effects: 'because of this 'non-definition' of diversity, which is intended to be broad and inclusive, the main beneficiaries of these policies are sometimes white women"[35]. Some countries, such as France, therefore favour **more targeted policies**. Public policy thus balances a strict parity policy on the one hand, and mechanisms focused on geographical and social diversity on the other (e.g. diversity of profiles on selection committees, the *Fonds Image de la Diversité* to support project leaders from the city's priority areas or calls for proposals to support the employment of people with disabilities).

[35] *Le dérangeur – petit lexique en voie de décolonisation*, Collectif Piment, éditions Hors D'atteinte, 2020, p. 66

IV. CONDITIONS FOR EFFECTIVENESS: INTEGRATING THE PRINCIPLES, AVOIDING PITFALLS AND BLIND SPOTS, AND EVALUATING

1. THERE IS NO MAGIC FORMULA, BUT THERE ARE SEVERAL KEY PRINCIPLES

Firstly, there is no **'one-size-fits-all solution'** ("no one-size-fits-all solution exists" Loist, 2024), that can be replicated in every country. Across Europe, there is a vast diversity of measures, which differ in form, criteria, objectives and so on. Measures that work in some countries may not work in others, as Chloé Delaporte (Professor of Film and Audiovisual Studies at the University of Montpellier Paul-Valéry) emphasises. This is confirmed by the GEP Analysis Project[36], which tested the hypothetical application of measures in several countries and found highly varied degrees of success. This is all the truer given that the measures taken are not always comparable due to the economic, political, social, and cultural contexts of the various states in which they are implemented. Similarly, the film industry does not carry the same political or economic weight in each of the countries studied.

Nevertheless, several key principles can be identified.

A **first key principle**: **we must move from intention to action**. Declarations of intent or commitments are insufficient given the difficulty of bringing about real change. Susan Liddy explains that in Ireland, there was much that was positive in the sector with regard to policy and practices but there was also less animation and urgency directed towards the implementation of practical, tangible measures that would begin to transform the way the industry currently does business, even in an increasingly supportive GEDI (Gender equality, Diversity and Inclusion) landscape. As a reminder, 8 countries have stated their intention to introduce measures without having yet done so (Albania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Malta, the Netherlands), we hope that this step can be taken.

[36] As a reminder, this is a comparative analysis designed, in particular, to assess the factors driving the effectiveness of public policies promoting gender equality and the impact of network-based approaches. It was carried out between 2021 and 2024 in three countries (Germany, Canada and the United Kingdom), under the direction of Skadi Loist. The final report is entitled *"Re-Framing the Picture"*.

This raises the question of which is the better strategy: incentives or coercion. Opinions and experiences differ. According to Doris Eikhof, Professor of Cultural Economy & Policy at the University of Glasgow, the "carrot" works better than the "stick" if the aim is to foster a deeper awareness: *"There is evidence from neuroscience that punishment, blaming and shaming blocks access to the part of the brain that we need for learning how to do better*". However, if an incentive-based policy is put in place, it is absolutely essential to ensure that professionals take responsibility (e.g. by verifying that the commitments made in order to receive support have actually been honoured). According to Skadi Loist, Associate Professor of Film Studies at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, the 'carrot' approach is all the more crucial given that it can be difficult to introduce more restrictive policies in a climate of renewed resistance. Many countries do, in fact, prefer to '*get industry on board*' and hope for self-regulatory measures rather than imposing rules, even at the risk of these measures sometimes proving ineffective.

For others, incentives have their limits. Chloé Delaporte, for example, does not believe that the 'carrot' approach is the right solution**.** Having introduced an effective gender parity bonus, the example of France shows that its effects have plateaued, and the decision to combine it with a gender parity penalty will reveal its effects in the years to come. Nevertheless, whether the measure is an incentive or a regulatory one, the concept of **accountability within the sector is essential to bring about genuine changes in practice. This will be the second key principle.** According to Susan Liddy, Senior Lecturer in Media and Communication Studies at the University of Limerick, "'*accountability is at the beginning, and at the end of any attempt to support creative diversity*". It is the responsibility of everyone - employees, audiences, citizens and public authorities - to hold professionals to account and call for change. Without a clear demand for change, nothing will change. Holding people to account means not only ensuring that organisations or professionals in the sector take ownership of the issue of gender equality, but also ensuring that this is not merely a token gesture without genuine action (hence the importance of monitoring these schemes).

A **third key principle: a single measure is not enough; a systemic approach must be prioritised, with interdependent measures**. According to Austria, *"It is hard to get to 50/50. To get there, you need a series of measures. Higher-budget female-driven films and more women in production are key to reaching the target*

sustainably. So you need to maintain surrounding measures to foster applications" to schemes. Indeed, it is just as important to combine data collection, awareness-raising policies and early-stage measures to encourage women to join the sector or take up key roles, as it is to introduce binding affirmative action policies (e.g. quotas). The British Film Institute states: *"it takes a full wholesale effort across the piece to drive any change and this has been seen when movements like Me Too meet data collection, plus incentives, plus accountability and targets.*"

It is worth noting that **our study, which covers all countries in geographical Europe, confirms a number of conclusions from *Re-Framing the Picture*,** whose comparative analysis was based on Germany, the United Kingdom and Canada[37]. Here is an extract from its findings (Loist et al., 2024): "*In the experience of industry experts, these design elements make policies more effective:*

- *addressing the root cause of a problem, not just the symptoms;*
- *instigating action and going beyond performativity;*
- *setting financial incentives, ensuring enforceability and holding people accountable;*
- *adopting intersectional, sustainable and longer term approaches;*
- *involving more than the usual suspects in their implementation and being associated with a prominent policy lead or champion."*

2. FIVE PITFALLS TO AVOID

It is important to highlight here certain biases that may hinder the effectiveness of the measures.

- **The first pitfall is that of the *status quo* and the myth of institutional neutrality.** The introduction of genuinely transformative reforms (reserved quotas, financial penalties, strict conditionality on aid) inevitably comes up against the constraints of alliances within the sector. Quoting Newsinger and Eikhof (2020), Susan Liddy points out that transformative measures give rise to controversy as they entail the creation of "*uneasy coalitions of stakeholders*". Consequently, the key question for enhancing the impact of

[37] A study carried out as part of the GEP Analysis project, which is referred to several times in this study.

agencies' actions is to determine to what extent transformative policies are encouraged, merely *tolerated*, or actively hindered by the industry.

- The second pitfall is to **assume that institutional measures are incapable of changing the structure,** that is, the way in which the film industry and professionals in the sector operate. The comparative study of public policies, "*Re-Framing the Picture*" (Loist et al., 2024) reveals that organisational and industrial structures are obstacles to improving gender equity. Structures "*both create gender inequity problems (a claim already well evidenced) and impede efforts to remedy gender inequity problems (a claim not as clearly evidenced)"*. Faced with this inertia, public institutions risk succumbing to a **temptation to withdraw from political engagement** by positioning the 'structure' as a sphere beyond the reach of public reform.
- The third pitfall is to **adopt a discourse that equates measures promoting gender parity with measures that 'help' women** (Jansson, 2024). This would amount to further delegitimising the place that is rightfully theirs by attributing their presence not to their merit but to their status as women, as emphasised by Sara Cuenca, a Spanish sociologist. In this regard, Christine Delphy states: "Women must be treated on an equal footing with men, who are not required to be feminists, and must be able to access these positions without having higher standards imposed on them - which is the classic form of discrimination: they are expected to 'deserve' what others are simply entitled to[38]".
- The fourth pitfall would be to **base affirmative action measures on an essentialist view of women's lived experience whilst ignoring their differences**. Indeed, there are multiple factors (social class, ethnic origin, disability, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, etc.) that make the journey for some women all the more complex. To ignore these is ultimately to favour a particular category of women. See the section "Broadening the scope: the challenge of intersectionality" for further information.
- The final pitfall would be **to implement affirmative action policies in a bureaucratic manner, thereby stripping them of their political dimension** "and reducing them to a series of needs or gaps to be addressed through

[38] *Classer dominer, qui sont les autres ?,* Christine Delphy, La fabrique éditions, 2008, p. 63

administrative decisions concerning the allocation of resources[39]". Indeed, this pitfall stems from the tension between the desire not to appear militant from an institutional perspective and the collective responsibility of public institutions to restore a certain degree of equality of opportunity. Public policy thus risks creating what Sabri Derinoz, a researcher in information and communication at UCLouvain Saint-Louis Brussels, describes as a "*false sense of problem-solving"*. The accumulation of statistical indicators or "ticking boxes" would allow institutions to demonstrate their administrative compliance without, however, challenging the actual power dynamics or the sector's patriarchal culture.

3. WHAT THE MEASURES IN PLACE DO NOT (YET) CHANGE

We asked the institutes what limitations they had encountered regarding the impact of the measures they had put in place.

The first two limitations identified, mentioned by 13 countries respectively, are "**The measures only apply to films directly supported by the institute and not to the entire national film industry**" and "**The changes remain fragile in the absence of a sustainable political commitment".**

Have you identified any limitations in the impact that the measures you have put in place can have? (33 respondents, multiple answers possible)	**Number of countries**
The measures only apply to films directly supported by the institute and not to the entire national film industry	13
The changes remain fragile in the absence of a sustainable political commitment	13
The progress observed remains concentrated in certain roles or levels of responsibility	12
The measures improve statistical representation but do not sufficiently alter power dynamics	10
Progress is slow despite the measures put in place	9
Gender equality measures do not take sufficient account of other factors contributing to discrimination or inequality	9
The measures have little impact on cultural norms and persistent stereotypes	7

[39] "Diversity mainstreaming : dépasser les approches technocratiques et d'addition des inégalités", Judith Squires, L'Harmattan, « Cahiers du Genre », 2008/1 n° 44 | pages 73 to 94

Not applicable	7
The effects are more visible in terms of entry into the profession than in women's career progression	5
The measures benefit established professionals more than new talent	3
Measures that sometimes combine diversity and gender parity tend to dilute the final impact	2
No specific limitations identified	2
The measures have reached a ceiling in terms of effectiveness	1
The measures address the symptoms rather than the structural causes	1

4. BEYOND THE FIGURES: CHANGING THE STRUCTURE

a. Female directors: a powerful but insufficient indicator

Historically, the study by the Lab Femmes de Cinéma has focused on the proportion of female directors in the European film industry. Many institutes do the same or extend their monitoring to key roles such as production and screenwriting.

In fact, the **presence of female directors is a powerful indicator in that it can have an impact on the rest of the crew, whether in front of or behind the camera.** The European Audiovisual Observatory[40] notes that there is an encouraging snowball effect when it comes to having women in key roles: women in one role are more likely to work with other women. For example, the share of female writers and producers is significantly higher when the director is a woman. The ÖFI's Film Gender Report (Austria) and the report by Directors UK (United Kingdom) have also noted a general increase of women in other crew positions when a woman directs. Similarly, **the more women onscreen become visible the more women hold the positions of director, script, or production.** (Pommer, Loist, 2020 and 2026, Liddy 2022).

This is also a **powerful indicator for bringing about change in the stories that are told.** Sara Cuenca emphasises that these shifts in narrative are all the more significant as they themselves contribute to a more egalitarian society.

However, the **almost exclusive focus on female directors or on women in key roles can obscure a number of other issues,** such as the persistence of

40 https://www.obs.coe.int/fr/web/observatoire/-/27-female-workforce-in-european-film-production.-parity-by-2047-

inequalities in technical roles (*below-the-line*) and in the distribution of financial power**. 12 countries** identify as a limitation of their measures the fact that "the progress observed remains concentrated in certain roles or levels of responsibility". Furthermore, Chloé Delaporte questions the relevance of focusing on a figure of authority and refers to the concept of feminist auteurism, as studied by Jane Gaines and Geneviève Sellier: can one defend an auteurist position that continues to place the filmmaker at the centre? Does attributing the symbolic power of a film to the director not amount to reproducing a patriarchal power structure in which hierarchy takes precedence over the collective nature of film-making?

b. Who decides?

One of the key insights shared by the researchers we met centres on the limitations of simply *counting women*. Indeed, we have seen that collecting data and monitoring the proportion of women in directing roles or other key positions is one of the most commonly adopted measures. According to Loist and al. (2024), ***"improving numerical representation is the prime intended policy outcome. Most policies perceive gender inequity as a problem of women's under-representation".*** Whilst this is an absolutely essential indicator, many researchers are concerned that the focus on numerical representations of women dilutes deeper and therefore more lasting changes. In their view, concentrating on numerical indicators could create the **superficial impression that a problem has been resolved without transforming the sector's patriarchal culture, nor the organisation of work, nor the distribution of financial power** (*"There is a real utility of measuring and developing indicators but it can also have unintended effects when people focus more on answering to KPIs without having a holistic understanding of the phenomenon, leading to a false sense of problem-solving that can create other problems or hide some.*" - Sabri Derinoz).

Indeed, the focus on women's role in projects is limited by the difficulty of truly balancing power relations at their root. 10 countries consider that one of the limitations of their policies promoting gender parity is that "The measures improve statistical representation but do not sufficiently alter power relations". Indeed, across Europe, there is a **glass ceiling for women in positions of power.** The example of the Nordic countries is particularly telling: even though these countries have a very strong culture of equality and generally have an above-average

proportion of women in key creative roles, i.e. directing, producing and screenwriting (31% women in Sweden over the period 2010-2020, 30% in Denmark, 26.4% in Finland, etc.), gender inequalities persist in a male-dominated landscape (Loist et al., 2024). This example also serves as a reminder that progress towards gender equality in society does not automatically translate into progress towards gender equality in the film industry: we cannot expect this to happen of its own accord; action must be taken to support this change.

This glass ceiling is also evident in the **difficulty countries face in reducing the budget or pay gaps between women and men**. Spain is paying particular attention to this issue because, in its case "*the most important remaining limitation concerns the economic dimension of inequality. Greater numerical representation does not automatically mean equal access to resources, larger productions or positions of power.*"

For Chloé Delaporte, the figure of the female director is an interesting socio-economic indicator to focus on, but she does not consider it the most representative: **the role of the producer should be given greater prominence** as it is often the production company that puts together the teams and, sociologically speaking, a production company working with a female director is more likely to entrust other key roles to women. A common feature amongst the Nordic countries studied by Skadi Loist et al. in "Gender Inequality in the Nordic Film Industry: Exploring Above-the-Line Positions in Film Production" is that the presence of men in producer roles is strongly correlated with the presence of men in key creative positions. Austria acknowledges that existing measures do not address the concentration of financial decision-making power within production companies or ensure that women hold positions with financial authority in film production.

The pursuit of gender parity within funding bodies - and more specifically in the composition of grant-awarding committees, management positions and festival juries - appears to be a logical prerequisite for greater parity in the selection of projects receiving support and, consequently, a rebalancing of financial power. Several institutes were particularly keen to emphasise the **key role of selection committees** and the importance of these committees themselves being **made aware of the issue and/or diversified** in order to support the diversity of projects submitted for consideration. **16 countries** also report having implemented measures in "awareness-raising among decision-making bodies". Montenegro notes

how *"The parity in decision making bodies provided us with more female driven stories and many more sensitive topics"*. Norway adds: "*If you have diversity around the table, you will get diversity in projects. Diversity among the people deciding is essential, it definitely changed the conversations in the deciding room"* - where, out of the six people holding decision-making positions on the various committees, two or three were from minority backgrounds.

c. Shaking up the structure

According to Doris Eikhof, the most important thing is to change the behaviour behind the figures. To break this cycle of the status quo, public decision-makers cannot be content with individual measures to support female creators (empowering interventions such as mentoring), however essential for paving the way in the industry. They must undertake systemic reforms (transforming interventions) that directly tackle the organisation of work, the criteria for allocating budgets and the mechanisms for holding producers to account. Reforms aimed at changing the sector's practices must therefore be pursued; for example, raising awareness of bias amongst selection committees and senior management, linking the allocation of funding to practices that promote equal opportunities, and amending the framework governing the organisation of work. To bring about lasting change, it is also **important to tackle the root of the problem and not just the symptoms** (Loist, 2024 GEP, Derinoz), namely the low representation, gradual disappearance or even the devaluation of women in the sector.

Ensuring that changes are sustained over time is the result of long-term structural transformation. In Spain, "*the purpose of positive-action policies is not simply to reach a particular percentage in a particular year, but to help consolidate structural change until equal access to opportunities, resources and positions of responsibility no longer requires corrective intervention"*. To achieve this, "*more comprehensive and sustainable action*" is required.

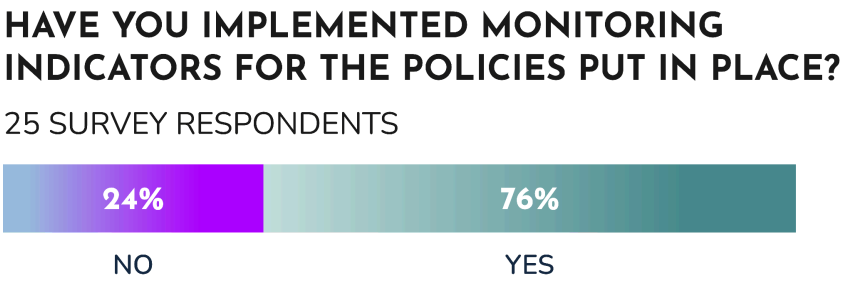
5. ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF MEASURES: A CORNERSTONE OF EFFECTIVENESS

The researchers we met placed particular emphasis on the **importance of evaluating public policies** to ensure their effectiveness.

Doris Eikhof emphasises the **need to incorporate evaluation and monitoring methods right from the policy-design stage.** The comparative study led by Skadi Loist (Gender Equity Policy Analysis Project), for which Eikhof oversaw the policy analysis, on public policies implemented in three countries (Germany, the United Kingdom and Canada) does indeed highlight that "*most policies have weak or no mechanisms for accountability and usually include no evaluation mechanisms to measure their effectiveness. They are often formulated in a way that opens them to faux compliance, partial compliance or non-compliance.*" Research frequently highlights the importance of having regular data on workforce composition, which can help to avoid assuming that the situation is improving or believing that current equality measures are the most appropriate for bringing about change (Liddy, 2022).

Several countries clearly emphasise the **importance of these indicators for reorienting existing policies**, such as France (“*the findings of our observatory encourage us to adapt our public policies”*, cf. the introduction of the gender parity penalty by the CNC) or Germany (“*Collecting and analysing data is also highly beneficial, as it gives us a clear view of the initial situation and the impacts, allowing us to react accordingly”*).

We therefore asked the film institutes whether they had put in place monitoring indicators.



Amongst the responding institutes, **76%** stated that they had put in place monitoring indicators for the policies implemented. The responses do not make it clear whether there are indicators for each of the measures implemented or only for some of them. At the same time, a significant proportion of respondents (24%)

confirmed that they had not put monitoring indicators in place. The eight institutes that considered the question not applicable, as they had no measures in place, ... were excluded from the calculation.

Chloé Delaporte emphasises, however, that **"*quantitative data are not the be-all-end-all of evaluating public policy*".** When it comes to measuring the effectiveness of a measure, there are sometimes more elusive developments that figures cannot capture (e.g. improvements in the quality of work, an end to the culture of silence surrounding sexual violence or problematic behaviour).

V. STAYING ON COURSE

1. THE URGENT NEED FOR STRONG AND SUSTAINED POLITICAL SUPPORT

In the survey of European film institutes, **a "strong political commitment from public authorities" was cited by 73% of respondents (from 24 countries) as the most powerful lever** for strengthening gender parity and maximising the impact of measures. Furthermore, national political impetus was identified by 13 countries as **one of the three main catalysts for public action**. As Finland points out, *"the fact that authorities are recognising and admitting that gender disparity is a problem and that it requires actions to combat, is key to any improvement"*.

This political commitment is therefore necessary to ensure that film institutes are able to champion this issue and keep it at the top of the European film agenda. Spain confirms that "*political continuity is also essential. Structural change requires policies that remain stable long enough to affect professional careers, production structures and industry practices."* Conversely, as Austria states: "*differing political and ideological priorities, can make it more difficult to advance equality measures.*"

Whilst political support is the most effective driver of reform, it is also its main point of vulnerability. **13 European agencies (39.4%) identify the lack of a sustained political commitment as the major constraint** on the impact of their actions. The phrase summarised by the Danish Film Institute, ***"Political winds mean everything"*** illustrates just how much the continuity of gender equality policies remains dependent on changes in government and the ideological climate.

The study also reveals the vulnerability of equality policies in the face of ***backlash*** and the rise of conservative rhetoric:

- **The case of Sweden**: Long cited as the quintessential European model for having achieved 50/50 parity under the leadership of Anna Serner, then Director of the Swedish Film Institute, Sweden is currently undergoing a marked period of regression, as Maria Jansson, a Swedish researcher, explained to us. Under pressure from conservative politicians and debates challenging public intervention on the grounds of an alleged infringement of 'artistic freedom', the official 50/50 target is said to have been removed from the institute's strategic guidelines, and the directory of female filmmakers has reportedly ceased to be updated. Sweden is one of the few European

countries to have seen a decline in the number of films directed by women between 2015-2019 (36.2%) and 2020-2025 (34.6%, a fall of 1.6 percentage points).

- Furthermore, the rollback of diversity and inclusion policies, largely originating in the United States, is being felt in many countries.

Budget cuts and competing priorities: fiscal austerity policies (cited by 8 countries) and 'competing political priorities' (cited by 11 countries) risk relegating equality to the status of an adjustment variable. According to Switzerland, "*there is no resistance in the sense that, at present, we do not see a backlash as in the United States, but there is a clash of priorities and an austerity policy that limit the scope for action.*"

Faced with this political vulnerability, researchers agree on the need to **legally and institutionally embed the progress made** so that it can withstand shifts in government policy or changes in leadership. **Relying on national and international legal frameworks** could be a solution: equality policies are all the more sustainable the more they are enshrined in the statutes of film institutes, the more they are underpinned by binding national legislation (such as the *UK Equality Act 2010*, which imposes a duty to promote equality on organisations managing public funds) or by key European texts (the Council of Europe's 2017 Recommendation, Generation Equality Forum).

2. PRIORITIES FOR THE COMING DECADE

Finally, we asked the film institutes to identify their **priorities** for advancing gender parity **over the next ten years.**

7 countries replied that there was **no clear priority, or indeed no priority** at all on this issue, or **did not reply** to this question at all. These were the Czech Republic, Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania, Serbia, Slovakia and Sweden. Some justify this by citing competing political priorities; for example, the Czech Republic mentions a political context that renders this issue a secondary concern, whilst Latvia's priority is first and foremost to strengthen the Latvian sector and the funding available, before considering the distribution of funds.

Conversely, **a large number of countries reiterate their commitment to achieving effective parity in the film sector,** whether through the continuation of

existing measures or through their diversification ("*The ICAA is fully committed to the goal of achieving real and effective equality in our society"* - Spain*, "We [VAF] as film fund remain committed to raising awareness and encouraging inclusive practices"* - Flanders, *"We continue to make equity, diversity and inclusion a priority of our corporate and funding ten-year strategies so the work will continue"* - UK). **6 countries** hope to **develop a policy promoting parity in the coming years**. These are Albania, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Hungary, North Macedonia and Romania. **2 countries**, whose gender parity policies appear to have reached a certain level of maturity, are prioritising the maintenance of what has already been put in place: these are Austria and Norway.

As the question of priorities for the next ten years remains open, here are the areas of action that were most frequently mentioned:

- the **strengthening or diversification of financial incentives to promote gender parity** (e.g. Germany, Flanders, France, North Macedonia, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Switzerland);
- supporting women in their **careers and in leadership roles** (e.g. Germany, Austria, Cyprus, Estonia, Flanders, Greece, Iceland, Italy, North Macedonia, Slovenia);
- developing a **more intersectional strategy** (e.g. Germany, Austria, Finland, Flanders, North Macedonia, the United Kingdom);
- the **fight against discrimination and all forms of violence** (e.g. Germany, France, North Macedonia, Portugal, Slovenia, the United Kingdom);
- **raising awareness and ensuring diversity in decision-making bodies** (e.g. Germany, Flanders, North Macedonia, Slovenia);
- **fostering talent** (e.g. Croatia, Flanders) ;
- **data collection** (e.g. Cyprus, Malta, Flanders, North Macedonia);
- Whilst several countries mention **working conditions** (e.g. Germany, Montenegro, Slovenia), only Germany prioritises measures to support parenthood;
- Spain and the United Kingdom, which already have progressive policies in place, are keen to step up efforts to **reduce the budget gaps** between films directed by men and those directed by women.

3. UNITING AND PERSEVERING

As there still seems to be a long way to go, we wish to highlight the **recommendations made by both researchers and film institutes** to ensure that gender parity progresses within the sector.

a. Professionals across the entire film industry: take action!

First and foremost, the involvement of the entire sector is essential. As a reminder, the sector's mobilisation is one of the primary catalysts and one of the key drivers cited by film institutes. Government action is absolutely crucial, but it is often limited to films directly supported by the institute rather than the entire national production (which, as a reminder, is the primary limitation faced by film institutes). North Macedonia therefore suggests that *"Broadcasters, festivals and professional organisations should also be actively involved to ensure that progress extends beyond films directly supported by the Agency*". One could, of course, cite numerous examples of distributors or festivals across Europe that have developed policies promoting gender parity and diversity. **In fact, the involvement of distributors is cited by 16 countries as a lever capable of reinforcing the impact of public policies**, though this may not be sufficiently encouraged in some countries. One of the strengths of the BFI's (United Kingdom) Diversity Standards is that they have extended beyond the scope of films supported by the BFI and have been widely adopted, for example, by the BAFTAs, BBC Film, Film4 and Screen Scotland, thereby embedding these criteria more deeply within industry practices. Spain confirms that *"public funding alone cannot completely eliminate the gap. Access to broadcasters, platforms, distributors, private investment and international co-production also plays an important role*." As with distribution, it is important that gender parity is addressed as a cross-cutting issue, from the writing stage right through to the distribution of works.

The involvement of the sector and all professionals is key not only to embedding best practice and ensuring gender parity at every stage of the production and broadcasting of works, but also, at times, to filling the gaps when funding bodies are unable or no longer able to act. In Belgium, the Flanders Audiovisual Fund has issued a call for everyone to take action: "*Achieving inclusion can only succeed if everyone is convinced of its importance and actively contributes to it in their daily practice. We want to emphasise that achieving*

meaningful and sustainable change is only possible if the entire sector, broadcasters and film schools, as well as education more broadly, work together. It is explicitly not a task for a film fund alone: consultation and commitment from all stakeholders in the sector and in education are essential to bring about change and to sustain it." Similarly, North Macedonia also advocates for sustainable progress which will require long-term cooperation between the Film Agency, public authorities, producers, broadcasters, festivals, educational institutions and professional organisations.

b. Collaboration, inspiration, allyship

This involvement of the entire sector will be all the stronger as it will be based on the principle of **active solidarity amongst allies**. This convergence or coalition can take place at various levels.

Firstly, the study highlights just how much **the worlds of research, the professional and voluntary sectors, and public authorities** stand to gain from working hand in hand. It is, in fact, in this spirit that we sought to carry out this study. Whilst several organisations have already collaborated with researchers or universities, such collaboration remains far too rare. Skadi Loist, Associate Professor of Film Studies at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, reminds us just how much literature has highlighted the power of this 'velvet triangle' comprising the voluntary sector, academia and the public sector. These exchanges form the basis of Spain's policy: on the one hand, research carried out by CIMA (Asociación de mujeres cineastas y de medios audiovisuales) has provided "*particularly valuable evidence*" over the last decade, while exchanges with professional associations have "*helped ICAA identify where public funding can have the greatest structural impact.*"

Several researchers also encourage the **co-design of measures** with professionals and representatives of the people for whom the measures are intended ("*it is crucial that any tools and measures for creative diversity is done with allyship"* - Liddy, 2022). The United Kingdom therefore plans to increase dialogue with under-represented groups to better understand their needs. Portugal is currently engaged in a brainstorming process on measures to support the strategic priorities set out in its Policy Plan for 2024-2028: to this end, it has established a collective consultation process bringing together nearly a hundred professionals and staff

members from the ICA (the Portuguese institute). **Links with the research community could be further developed,** although this is already the case in several countries. Maria Jansson, Professor of Gender Studies at Örebro University, emphasises: "*it is the role of research to* ***shed light on problems***". Moreover, researchers' freedom of speech often provides a space where issues can be raised, whereas the fear of professional reprisals sometimes prevents members of the sector from raising all issues. But she also emphasises that researchers can be **allies when it comes to understanding the complexity of public policies and their impact.** Susan Liddy, Senior Lecturer in Media and Communication Studies at the University of Limerick, acknowledges that researchers must adapt their discourse to present their work better, to generate greater public interest and to translate more effectively into concrete action. This edition of the Lab's study is pleased to have been able to engage in dialogue with researchers to shed further light on the observations it has been making over the past ten years.

On a different scale, **European film institutes have every interest in continuing their collaboration** on issues of gender equality and diversity. Moreover, several of them highlight the spirit of mutual inspiration within the EFAD (" *We are heavily influenced by the best practices shared within the EFAD network*") and the importance of the study published annually by the Lab Femmes de Cinéma in providing a comprehensive overview of the public policies implemented across European countries. Several countries mention the inspiration they draw from schemes implemented in other European countries (Spain, Austria and the Nordic countries are amongst those most frequently cited) or by Eurimages and Creative Europe. Beyond shared best practices, some countries propose going further, for example by pooling resources, such as for the standardisation and harmonisation of data collection at European level.

Finally, **collaboration between associations** to advocate for measures with a united voice was encouraged by all the researchers. Sabri Derinoz, a researcher in information and communication at UCLouvain Saint-Louis Brussels, emphasises the need to adopt, as far as possible, a united stance on common issues and to avoid at all costs pitting associations against one another, something sometimes sought

by certain stakeholders. In "Deeds not words[41]", Doris Eikhof, Professor of Cultural Economics and Politics at the University of Glasgow, sums up this position perfectly: *"We won't all agree on how to talk about gender equity or women's equality, and neither will the organisations we work with. But we believe that there is enough – in fact, plenty – common ground for us to work together, to improve women's opportunities and experiences with strategic, collective action. Within that action, there can – and should – be room for individuals and organisations to tailor their approaches.*" In a European political context marked by the rise of conservative rhetoric, "*fragmenting our struggles is a hindrance*", asserts Chloé Delaporte (Professor of Film and Audiovisual Studies at the University of Montpellier Paul-Valéry). She, along with Sabri Derinoz, Skadi Loist and Doris Eikhof, emphasises that this **convergence of voices and concerted action** around one or more measures is a necessary condition for organisations to continue to have an impact on public authorities.

c. Persevering, even after initial setbacks and early successes

Finally, this study highlights an obvious point: **to achieve long-term change, we must persevere.** The sometimes fragile or disappointing results of public policies implemented in recent years should not discourage us. The film institutes say so themselves: 15 countries cite the time required to bring about change as an obstacle. These fragile results should, first and foremost, prompt the film institutes to **question** their approach: to evaluate policies and reform them where necessary. They should then encourage **perseverance.** Austria sums it up perfectly: "*Structural inequalities are complex and multifaceted. Meaningful change requires sustained efforts over time, and the impact of many measures only becomes visible in the medium to long term.*"

Conversely, **achieving results must not signal the end of the measures.** To ensure that progress is truly sustained over time, it is essential to ensure that best practices are now firmly embedded amongst professionals. The example of Norway calls for caution: whilst the Diversity Incentive within the Market Scheme was suspended for several months following the appointment of a more conservative Minister for Culture, the projects submitted during this period were far less diverse -

[41] https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dCPb4xy4AQ3Z_d7JZzdbC5D8pBDCNCBF/view

proof of the financial incentive's effectiveness, but also of the need to persevere and maintain it so that the results are sustained over time. The example of Spain confirms this: progress is not necessarily linear (the proportion of female directors and screenwriters fell in 2025[42]) and this "*reinforces the case for maintaining structural measures over time rather than assuming that parity, once approached, becomes irreversible*". Slovenia sums it up perfectly: film institutes need *"to be consistent with the importance of these measures every year, and not neglect them when first results are positive*".

[42] ICAA data for 2025 show 99 feature films directed exclusively by women out of 463, or 21.4%, compared with 26.1% in 2024. Female participation in either directing or screenwriting stood at 43.4% in 2025, compared with 46.5% in 2024.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE NEXT DECADE

Ten years of public policy show that gender parity progresses when it is championed at all levels: by the funding bodies, by the governments that set the framework, by the European Union that encourages and harmonises, and by all the professionals who produce, distribute and teach cinema.

In light of the findings of this study, le Lab Femmes de Cinéma makes the following recommendations:

1. To national film institutes

- **Use public funding as a lever for gender parity.** Two-thirds of film councils consider financial incentives to be crucial, but only one-third have actually implemented them. Every institute that awards grants should adopt at least one mechanism linked to gender parity (bonuses, earmarked funding, allocation targets, conditionality), without ruling out the imposition of requirements where incentives reach their limit.
- **Assess compliance with and the effectiveness of measures and adapt those that are not working.** Each measure should be accompanied by public indicators and monitoring of the commitments made.
- **Share decision-making power.** Ensure gender parity on allocation committees, in management teams and on juries; train these bodies to recognise biases; and monitor women's representation beyond directing: in production, technical roles and budget disparities.
- **Support careers over the long term.** The proportion of female directors drops from 29% for debut films to 23% for subsequent films: support schemes must target the transition to the second film and beyond, develop mentoring and 'shadowing', and take parenthood into account.
- **Combat violence,** for example by raising awareness amongst film crews or making funding conditional on preventive measures.

2. To national governments and parliaments

- **Embed gender parity in law and in the statutes of film institutes**, so that policies remain resilient to changes in government: 13 institutes consider their progress to be fragile without a lasting political commitment.

- **Provide film institutes with the means to take action.** A lack of human resources and expertise is the main obstacle cited (17 countries), closely followed by a lack of financial resources (13 countries).

3. To European institutions

- **Strengthen data collection at European level**, for example by expanding the data analysed by the European Audiovisual Observatory and by including budget and pay gaps between male and female directors, which are currently tracked by only a minority of countries.
- **Strengthen equality criteria in European funding schemes**, notably AgoraEU (by introducing clear and concrete gender parity criteria in the programme's implementation and the allocation of its funding) and Eurimages, so that European institutions lead by example.
- **Assess whether and how the 2017 Council of Europe recommendation** has been implemented, and support those countries that have not yet adopted measures.

4. To the sector as a whole

- **To producers and social partners**: aim for gender parity in production teams and the representation of women in key roles, not just in directing. Regulate working practices to prevent all forms of discrimination and enable a diverse range of talent to work in the sector.
- **To broadcasters, streaming platforms, distributors and festivals**: adopt policies promoting diversity in creative work, both in front of and behind the camera, and publish monitoring data. As the policies of national film councils only apply to the films they fund, the commitment of broadcasters is essential to take this further.
- **To film schools**: develop a gender parity policy at student level and then support the professional integration of female graduates; raise awareness of these issues throughout the course of study.

5. To researchers and organisations

- **Strengthen dialogue between researchers, organisations and public authorities**, to design and evaluate measures together and present joint proposals with one voice.

APPENDICES

LIST OF INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED

Interviews with representatives of national film agencies, conducted as qualitative interviews (in alphabetical order):

- **Austrian Film Institute (AFI)**: Iris Zappe-Heller, Deputy Director, and Paul Kunz, member of the Gender and Diversity Department
- **British Film Institute (BFI):** Melanie Hoyes, Senior Director of Inclusion
- **Centre national du Cinéma (CNC)**: Leslie Thomas, Secretary General, and Simon Mazurel, CSR Project Officer
- **Instituto de la Cinematografía y de las Artes Audiovisuales (ICAA)**: detailed written response to our questions, prepared by Lorena Robredo, Head of the Support Unit within the Directorate General
- **Norwegian Film Institute (NFI):** Nedin Mutic, Senior Advisor in Talent and Inclusion

Qualitative interviews with researchers (in alphabetical order):

- **Sara Cuenca Suarez**, Sociologist specialising in gender inequalities (Spain)
- **Chloé Delaporte**, University Professor in Film and Audiovisual Studies, Department of Cinema, Audiovisual and New Media, Université de Montpellier Paul-Valéry (France)
- **Sabri Derinoz**, Researcher in media and communication studies at Engage – Research Centre for Publicness in Contemporary Communication, UCLouvain Saint-Louis Brussels (Belgium)
- **Doris Ruth Eikhof**, Professor of Cultural Economy & Policy, University of Glasgow, and CEO of Design Otherwise (United-Kingdom)
- **Maria Jansson**, Professor in Gender Studies, Örebro University (Sweden)
- **Susan Liddy**, Lecturer in Media and Communication Studies at the University of Limerick (Ireland) and President of Women in Film and Television International (WIFTI)

- **Skadi Loist**, Associate Professor of Film Studies, Department of Art and Media Studies, Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)

LIST OF RESPONDING NATIONAL FILM CENTRES

- **Albania**

Albanian National Cinematography Centre: http://nationalfilmcenter.gov.al

- **Austria**

Austrian Film Institute (ÖFI): https://www.filminstitut.at/en/

- **Belgium - Flanders**

Flanders Audiovisual Fund (VAF): https://www.vaf.be/fr

- **Bulgaria**

Bulgarian National Film Centre: https://www.nfc.bg/en/

- **Croatia**

Croatian Audiovisual Centre: https://www.havc.hr/eng/

- **Cyprus**

Cyprus Cinema Office (Department of Contemporary Culture, Deputy Ministry of Culture): https://www.gov.cy/culture/en/

- **Czech Republic**

Czech Audiovisual Fund: https://www.filmcenter.cz/en/home

- **Denmark**

Danish Film Institute (DFI): https://www.dfi.dk/en

- **Estonia**

Estonian Film Institute: https://filmi.ee

- **Finland**

Finnish Film Foundation: https://ses.fi/en/

- **France**

Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée (CNC): https://www.cnc.fr

- **Germany**

German Federal Film Board (FFA): https://www.ffa.de/?id=170

- **Greece**

Hellenic Film & Audiovisual Centre: http://www.gfc.gr/en/

- **Hungary**

National Film Institute Hungary: https://nfi.hu/en

- **Iceland**

Icelandic Film Centre: http://www.icelandicfilmcentre.is

- **Italy**

Ministero della Cultura Italia: https://cultura.gov.it/

- **Latvia**

National Film Centre of Latvia: http://nkc.gov.lv/en/

- **Lithuania**

Lithuanian Film Centre: http://www.lkc.lt/en/

- **North Macedonia**

North Macedonia Film Agency: https://filmagency.gov.mk/pocetna/

- **Malta**

Malta Film Commission: https://maltafilmcommission.com

- **Montenegro**

Film Centre of Montenegro: http://fccg.me/en/

- **Norway**

Norwegian Film Institute (NFI): https://www.nfi.no/eng

- **Netherlands**

Netherlands Film Fund: https://www.filmfonds.nl/page/2902/welcome

- **Poland**

Polish Film Institute: http://pisf.pl/en/

- **Portugal**

Instituto do Cinema e Audiovisual, IP - ICA: https://www.ica-ip.pt/pt/

- **Romania**

Romanian Film Centre: https://cnc.gov.ro/?page

- **Serbia**

Film Centre Serbia: http://fcs.rs/eng/

- **Slovakia**

Slovak Film Institute: http://www.sfu.sk/en/about-us/slovensky-filmovy-ustav
Slovak Audiovisual Fund: https://www.avf.sk/english_contemporary.aspx

- **Slovenia**

Slovenian Film Centre, Public Agency: https://www.film-center.si/en/

- **Spain**

Instituto de la Cinematografía y de las Artes Audiovisuales (ICAA): http://www.culturaydeporte.gob.es/cultura/areas/cine/inicio.html

- **Sweden**

Swedish Film Institute: https://www.filminstitutet.se/en/

- **Switzerland**

Federal Office of Culture (FOC): https://www.bak.admin.ch/fr/cinema-ov

- **United Kingdom**

British Film Institute: https://www.bfi.org.uk

QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO EUROPEAN FILM INSTITUTES

❓ Email address

❓ Name of your institute

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1. Your National Institute's Gender Parity Policy

❓ 1.1 Since when has your institute been taking specific actions to promote gender equality in the film sector? (*mandatory*)

❓ 1.2 Which of the following measures have been implemented or are currently being implemented by your institute? (*mandatory / Several answers possible*)

- ☐ **Declarations of intent** (statements of objectives, charters, or recommendations);
- ☐ **Collection of gender-based data;**
- ☐ **Financial incentives for parity** (e.g., implementation of quotas or soft quotas, financial bonuses, etc.);
- ☐ **Awareness-raising, visibility, and information policies** (e.g., promoting female directors, institutional communication regarding parity policies and anti-discrimination efforts, etc.);
- ☐ **Measures against sexist and sexual violence and harassment** (e.g., training, designated contact points, funding conditional on a prevention framework, etc.);
- ☐ **Measures supporting the emergence of female talent** (e.g., specific support for female students in film schools, mentorship, support for transitioning from short films to a debut feature, etc.);
- ☐ **Awareness-raising among decision-making bodies** (e.g., setting up gender-balanced committees, raising awareness of biases among juries/committees);
- ☐ **Measures to support parenthood** (e.g., including childcare costs in grant/subsidy applications, childcare systems on set, etc.);
- ☐ **Intersectional initiatives** promoting diversity (e.g., gender identity, disability, ethnic background, age, sexual orientation, etc.) rather than just gender parity (e.g., action plans, awareness raising, affirmative action, intersectional data

collection, etc.);

- ☐ Other:
- ☐ Not relevant

❓ 1.3 How would you define the current phase of your institute's policy regarding gender parity? (*mandatory / Single choice*)

- ☐ No policy planned or in place to date;
- ☐ Setback or slowdown compared to previous commitments;
- ☐ Clear commitment, but no measures adopted yet;
- ☐ Implementation phase (policies adopted and being rolled out);
- ☐ Strengthening or diversification;
- ☐ Maturity;
- ☐ Other:
- ☐ I do not know

❓ 1.4 What were the main triggers for your policies? (*mandatory / Several answers possible)*

- ☐ Mobilisation of the industry;
- ☐ National political momentum;
- ☐ Legislative framework;
- ☐ European/international recommendations;
- ☐ Statistical studies;
- ☐ Social movements (#MeToo, etc.);
- ☐ Pressure from associations/activists;
- ☐ Other:
- ☐ Not applicable

1.4 bis Please specify. (*optional*)

❓ 1.5 Have you implemented monitoring indicators for the policies put in place? (*optional*)

- ☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not applicable

1.5 bis If yes, please specify which ones. (*optional*)

❓1.6 Which measure(s) or policy(ies) implemented by your institute do you find most effective / have had the most positive impact so far / is/are the most innovative? (*mandatory*)

❓ 1.7 Over the past ten years, are there any gender parity measures that you have discontinued? (*optional*)

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not applicable

1.7 bis If yes, which ones and for what reason(s)? (*optional*)

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2. Data and Statistical Monitoring

❓ 2.1 Regarding your national cinema: Could you indicate the average number of films produced by your country each year (distinguishing between minority and majority co-productions, if applicable)? What proportion of these films receive financial support from your institute? (*mandatory*)

❓ 2.2 Does your institution collect gender-disaggregated data regarding (*mandatory / Several answers possible*):

☐ Funding applications;

☐ Funding awarded;

☐ Financial amounts allocated;

☐ Budget gaps between projects led by female directors and those led by male directors;

☐ Pay gaps between women and men across different film professions (Gender Pay Gap);

☐ Representation in creative positions (directing, writing, producing, cinematography, editing, music, etc.);

☐ The composition of juries or committees;

- ☐ Corporate governance / company leadership;
- ☐ Representation in film festivals;
- ☐ Other:
- ☐ Not applicable

❓ 2.3 Have you observed (*optional* / *multiple choice*):

- ☐ Changes in budgets for projects led by women?
- ☐ Shifts in the pay gaps between women and men?
- ☐ A higher representation of women in key positions other than directing (producers, cinematographers, production designers, sound engineers, etc.)?
- ☐ Shifts in film narratives?
- ☐ Changes in the governance of the sector?
- ☐ Other:
- ☐ I do not know

2.3 bis Please specify (*optional*)

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3. Levers and Limitations of Implemented Policies

❓ 3.1 In your opinion, which **levers** are likely to strengthen gender parity in the film sector or maximise the impact of the measures implemented? (*mandatory* / *Several answers possible*):

- ☐ Strong political support from public authorities;
- ☐ Impetus from corporate governance or project managers ;
- ☐ Public stances taken by key industry figures;
- ☐ Mobilisation of professional organisations within the sector;
- ☐ Awareness-raising and training for industry professionals;
- ☐ Financial incentives (bonuses, specific support mechanisms, making public funding conditional on equality targets);
- ☐ Evolving social and cultural norms in society;
- ☐ Media hit;
- ☐ Involvement of broadcasters;

☐ Other:

☐ I do not know

3.1 bis If you have examples, please specify:

❓ 3.2 What are the main **obstacles** in the development, implementation, or effective impact of some of your measures? (*mandatory / Several answers possible*):

☐ Unfavourable geopolitical context;

☐ Unfavourable economic context;

☐ Legal constraints limiting certain measures;

☐ Institutional or organisational resistance;

☐ Competing political priorities;

☐ Lack of financial resources;

☐ Lack of human resources or dedicated expertise;

☐ Challenges in data collection or data reliability;

☐ Resistance from certain segments of industry professionals;

☐ Low representation of women in certain professions or leadership levels;

☐ The time required to produce structural changes;

☐ Other:

☐ Not applicable

3.2 bis If possible, please specify:

❓ 3.3 Have you identified any **limitations** to the impact of the measures you have implemented? (*optional / Several answers possible*):

☐ The measures only impact films directly supported by the institute, rather than the entirety of national production;

☐ The measures hit an efficiency ceiling;

☐ Progress remains slow despite the frameworks put in place;

☐ The effects are more visible on entry into the profession than on women's career advancement;

☐ The measures benefit established female professionals more than emerging

talent;

- ☐ Progress remains fragile without long-term political commitment;
- ☐ Parity measures do not sufficiently take into account other factors of discrimination or inequality;
- ☐ Diversity policies tend to dilute the stakes into a vague concept, resulting in no real results
- ☐ The measures have little impact on deeply rooted cultural norms and stereotypes;
- ☐ Measures aim at softening the consequences rather than addressing the root causes;
- ☐ The measures improve statistical representation but do not sufficiently alter power dynamics;
- ☐ Observed progress remains concentrated within specific professions or levels of responsibility;
- ☐ No specific limitations identified;
- ☐ Other:
- ☐ Not applicable

3.3 bis If possible, please specify:

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4. Perspectives and New Challenges

❓ 4.1 In your opinion, what are the priorities for the next ten years to develop gender parity in cinema within your country? (*mandatory*)

❓ 4.2 Are there any upcoming measures or recent changes that you would like to highlight? (*optional*)

❓ 4.3 Are there any measures driven by other European national centres that inspire you or have inspired you? (*optional*)

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5. Conclusion of the 2026 Study

❓ 5.1 How do you evaluate the current momentum for gender parity in your national film sector? (*Scale from 1 to 5, optional*)

1. **Very concerning:** little progress observed or risk of regression
2. **Somewhat concerning:** progress remains limited or fragile
3. **Mixed:** progress is being made but significant challenges remain
4. **Somewhat encouraging:** positive momentum is underway
5. **Very encouraging:** significant and sustainable progress is observed

❓ 5.2 Is there any other analytical point or assessment detail you would like to add? (*optional*)

REMINDER: A COMMITMENT BY THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Eurimages is the Council of Europe's cultural fund[43]. Eurimages helps to promote independent cinema by providing financial support for international co-productions - whether feature films, animated films or documentaries - and thus encourages cooperation between countries in the field of cinema.

A commitment to gender equality since 2012

Since 2012, Eurimages has been addressing the issue of gender equality in the film industry.

A working group on Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) (formerly the Gender Equality Working Group), comprising representatives from a number of the Fund's member states, meets three times a year. One of its main objectives is to analyse the role of women in the sector, both nationally and internationally, as well as within Eurimages, particularly in the project selection process.

In the past, Eurimages has adopted three strategies[44] for gender equality (covering the period 2016-2024). In December 2024, the Eurimages Executive Committee adopted its first comprehensive strategy for gender equality, diversity and inclusion (2025-2027)[45], thereby reaffirming its commitment to an inclusive, representative and equitable film industry.

As part of the gender equality strategies it has developed since 2016, the Fund has, in particular, introduced:

- **An increase in the maximum funding** that can be awarded to projects directed by women, up to 25% of the total production cost (compared with 17% for those directed by men), whilst maintaining the funding ceiling at €500,000,
- **The Audentia Prize**, awarded at a different festival each year since 2016, to highlight the work of outstanding female directors,
- **The publication** in 2020 of the *Livre d'or des réalisatrices*, celebrating 50 films directed by women,

[43] It has been operational since 1989 and comprises 39 of the 46 member states of this Strasbourg-based organisation, as well as Canada.

[44] https://www.coe.int/fr/web/eurimages/gender-equality-diversity

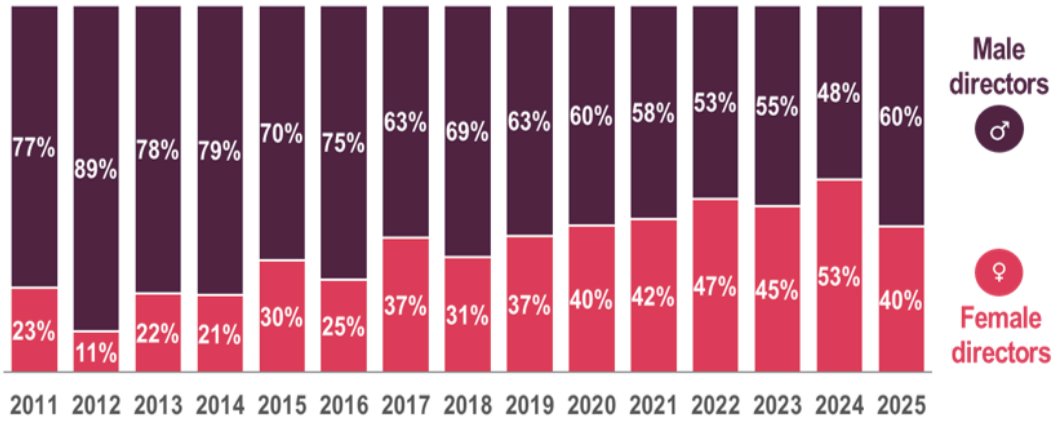
[45] https://rm.coe.int/eurimages-1ere-egdi-strategie-fr-web/1680b33a5f

- **Awareness-raising efforts** aimed at production companies submitting projects and the experts who assess them. Indeed, the Fund invites producers to include the following in their funding applications:
    - any previous collaboration with women in the roles of director and head of department,
    - any participation in festivals or awards won for films directed by women,
    - the presence of women in the artistic and technical teams of the submitted project,
    - and to specify, where applicable, whether the submitted project passes the Bechdel-Wallace test.
- **Sponsorships and patronage** granted since 2017 to various activities aimed at supporting gender equality in the film sector,
- **Data collection** to measure the progress made by the Fund in achieving its objectives.

Statistics reflecting Eurimages' commitments

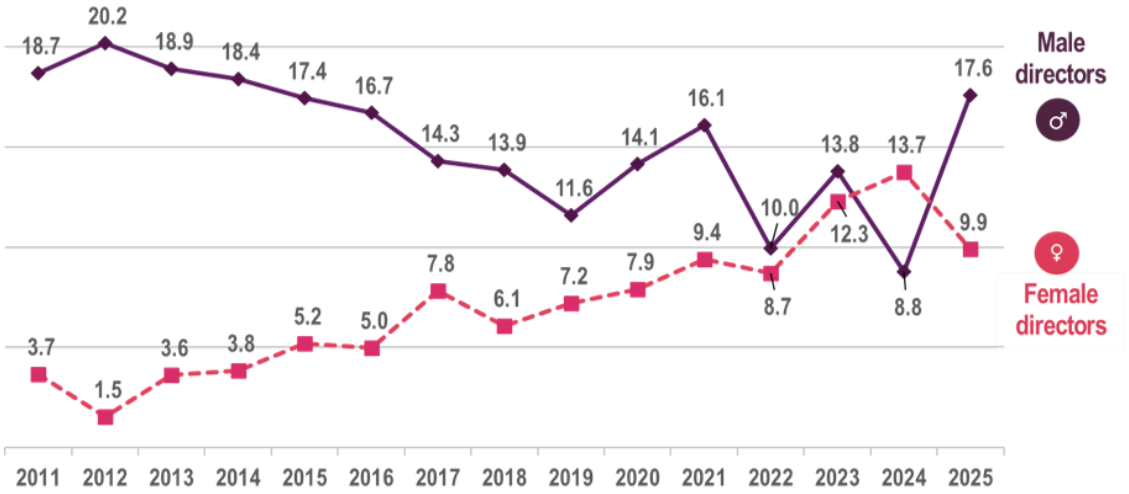
Recent statistics show significant progress towards gender parity in projects supported by Eurimages under its co-production support scheme, in line with its strategic objectives. Particularly thanks to efforts to encourage projects by female directors, the proportion of films directed by women supported by the Fund has risen steadily, from just 23% in 2011 to 40% or more from 2020 onwards. Following the pivotal year of 2024 - when, for the first time, projects directed by women outnumbered those directed by men, accounting for 53% of all supported projects - the proportion of projects directed by women fell back to 40% in 2025, remaining at the ten-year average and reflecting the proportion of projects by female directors among the applications for support received.

Proportion of supported projects by gender of the director (2011-2025)



Similarly, funding granted to projects directed by women has gradually increased. After peaking at 13.7 million euros in 2024 - a rise largely due to the big-budget films directed by women that year - funding granted to projects directed by women fell to 9.9 million euros in 2025, representing 36% of the total funding granted that year.

Trend in funding granted by gender of the director, in M€ (2011-2025)



Further efforts to promote inclusion

In 2022, the members of the Eurimages Executive Committee reinforced their commitment to diversity and inclusion by adopting the first strategy of the Fund for Diversity and Inclusion in the Film Industry for the period 2022-2024[46]. In January

[46] https://rm.coe.int/diversity-and-inclusion-strategy-fr/1680a87cff

2025, the Fund's comprehensive strategy for gender equality, diversity and inclusion (2025-2027) came into force.

Against this backdrop, the Fund has launched three major initiatives aimed at raising awareness of diversity and inclusion within the sector:

- Eurimages, in partnership with EFAD, collects data on measures to promote gender diversity across all member countries of both institutions. The information presented in this **map** focuses primarily on film funding schemes, festivals and organisations that promote diversity and inclusion in the film and audiovisual sectors, with the aim of highlighting the need for more ambitious action in these areas. This diversity and inclusion map**,** which is updated regularly, is available on the Eurimages website[47].
- Since 2024, Eurimages has been encouraging applicants for co-production support to voluntarily include information on **diversity and inclusion** in their funding applications. For example, producers may describe, in their statement of intent, their team's commitments, particularly regarding research practices, the handling of sensitive content, links with local communities or the use of experts.
- Since 2025, initiatives working to promote diversity and inclusion in the film industry have been able to apply for **Eurimages' patronage** (support without financial contribution). In early 2026, a call for proposals was launched for applications for **financial support (sponsorship)** from initiatives aimed at promoting diversity, inclusion and/or gender equality in the film industry. Following the recommendations made by independent experts, the Eurimages Executive Committee, meeting in plenary session in June 2026, approved the selection of seven initiatives to receive Eurimages sponsorship during the 2027-2029 cycle[48].

As part of its sponsorship for the 2024-2026 cycle, Eurimages is also supporting the Lab Femmes de Cinéma, and thus this study on the measures and policies put in place to promote gender parity at European level.

Eurimages has been publishing a newsletter since 2025, one or two times a year, covering the activities of the EDI working group. To subscribe to **the Eurimages newsletter on Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion,** click **here**.

[47] https://www.coe.int/fr/web/eurimages/gender-equality-diversity

[48] Sponsorship and Patronage - EURIMAGES

REMINDER: THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S COMMITMENTS TO PARITY[49, 50]

For over 30 years, the MEDIA section of the Creative Europe program has been helping to launch and disseminate projects with a European dimension and international potential beyond national and European borders. Its funding actions support audiovisual works, including films, TV series, documentaries, video games and immersive content, as well as cinemas, festivals, video-on-demand services and industrial markets. It also helps to stimulate European talent through training programmes, and contributes to the conquest of new audiences and film education.

In this context, since 2018 the Commission has been implementing a global strategy to promote the place of women in the sector and improve parity.

Thus, the first step was to collect statistics by funding the European Audiovisual Observatory's studies on the subject, as well as obtaining the proportions of women accessing the various MEDIA schemes to get a precise overview of the situation. The second stage consisted in maintaining a dialogue with the representatives of the sector's professional organisations, in order to fine-tune needs and coordinate joint actions.

The launch of the new MEDIA 2021-2027 program marks an important turning point with the introduction of a diversity criterion in all MEDIA support schemes, i.e. operating across the entire value chain. Project sponsors must now declare their diversity strategies (whether they relate to their projects or to the company), enabling them to obtain a score from 0 to 5 from the evaluation committee, depending on the efforts made.

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49 https://digital-strategy.ec.europa.eu/fr/news/gender-balance-diversity-and-inclusiveness-media-and-audiovisual-sectors

50 This section was not updated in 2026.

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