

## **Creative Europe presents its Monitoring Report 2020**

The COVID-19 pandemic had an unprecedented impact on the European Union's cultural, social and economic life in 2020. This Report looks at how, in this extraordinary context, Creative Europe in 2020 played its part in helping Europe's cultural and creative ecosystem to resist, recover and look forward.



European Commission

The Report highlights the key policy initiatives taken in 2020 with the support of Creative Europe. In particular, the high-level coordination meetings with Member States, the implementation of flexibility measures to cater for the new and changing needs of beneficiaries and the political agreement between the European Parliament and the Council on the Commission's 2018 proposal for the new Creative Europe programme. The report also illustrates how policy was translated into practice through the effective implementation of Creative Europe and the full execution of the budget available, with consistently high absorption capacity.

### **Supporting AV professionals**

In particular, the MEDIA Sub-programme - focusing on the audiovisual sector - advanced in supporting scaling-up and promotion of cross-border distribution of films in Europe and beyond. Aiming to tackle the unfavorable circumstances brought by the pandemic, MEDIA offered support along the whole value chain and focused on four main areas: skills, quality content, circulation and collaboration, and finally promotion and audiences. As a proof for success, 17 MEDIA-supported films received 27 nominations, from which 12 awards, at the five most prestigious occasions around the world.

## **Fostering talent and skills at European level**

Training to audiovisual professionals addressed a range of needs, from production to marketing, from development to legal aspects. Some targeted skills which are particularly in demand such as scriptwriting for TV series, while others focused on a market segment such as animation. In 2020, 6% of the MEDIA budget was dedicated to this objective, through support for 47 cutting-edge workshop organisers. In total, the supported courses welcomed and trained 2 445 professionals.

## **High quality, innovative content**

MEDIA's development funding supports films, short films, series, documentaries and videogames at the crucial phase when projects are born. In 2020 MEDIA dedicated over 30% of its budget to the creation of quality content financing the development of around 409 new film concepts. To make sure that films and TV series are shared across Europe, MEDIA pays special attention to supporting projects which are co-produced. Of all projects supported at the development stage, 88% were co-productions, 5 percentage points more than in the previous year.

## **Circulation and collaboration across borders**

Another pillar of MEDIA programme is to increase the theatrical distribution of films across borders, for which it allocated 29% of the budget in 2020. A total of 241 distributors under the Automatic scheme and 33 sales agents who manage European non-national films in their portfolio received grants to distribute films of their choice. The Selective Distribution scheme aims at providing targeted support to a limited number of films which have the potential to attract wide audiences across borders – 22 films in 2020. Such films are distributed on a large scale, most in 15-25 territories. Under this scheme sales agent and distributors handling the same title apply all together for a single project, which promotes more joined-up distribution strategies.

## **Promoting European works, reaching audiences**

Marketing and promotion strategies are key to the visibility of a work with potential audiences in Europe and in global markets. In 2020, 33% of the budget was used to support festivals and audience development, support cinema networks, promote European works online and organise MEDIA-funded public events. As a sign of resilience and creativity, festivals supported by MEDIA managed to reach almost 2.2 million in audience compared to 3.5 million in 2019 despite the unfavourable conditions and Europa Cinemas members experimented with many innovative ways to stay in touch with their audience throughout lockdowns. In 2020, in addition to ongoing support for individual festivals, support for was introduced for structured networks between festivals. .

## **Achieving unprecedented access to finance**

Access to finance is more challenging for SMEs in the cultural and creative sectors (CCS) than for other SMEs and has been identified as a core barrier to growth in the sector. This is why since 2016 European financial institutions can sign agreements with the European Investment Fund to benefit from a guarantee facility (GF) on loans issued to CCS companies. The success of CCS GF has outgrown expectations. This market-led financial instrument has widened the range of support available and tapped into new, greater sources of funding by reaching out to the financial sector, thus enabling investment and growth. The initial budget of EUR 121 M has been topped up by EUR 60 M in 2019 and another EUR 70 M in 2020. From 2016 to 2020, 5 500 loans, worth over EUR 935 million had been granted to more than 4 362 SMEs from the creative sectors. 2 815 companies benefited from this

scheme in 2020 alone.

Find out more about the performance and impact of the programme in the Monitoring Report 2020.

## More information

Creative Europe programme

## Related topics

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MEDIA programme

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