

Achieving gender equality and promoting diversity in the European Audiovisual sector

GOOD PRACTICE HANDBOOK

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The social partners of the EU Social Dialogue Committee in the Audiovisual sector¹ - commercial and public broadcasters, producers, and trade unions representing journalists, cast and crew, and other audiovisual professionals - have been cooperating to promote gender equality in film, radio and television for many years already.

As a follow up to the adoption of a Framework of Actions in 2011, the social partners decided to launch a study to evaluate the progress made towards gender equality in the sector, but also to explore the broader issue of diversity. The project was initiated in 2018 and received the financial support of the European Union.

The Good Practice Handbook published in May 2020 presents the results of this research. It is organised in three parts. A first section puts the information provided in the publication in context, with a general overview of global and European statistics on gender equality. This section also presents the EU legislative framework on equality between women and men and the fight against other forms of discrimination. In a second section, the Handbook highlights key policies and statements adopted in the sector in the last years to advance gender equality. Are also presented some of the available gender statistics for the audiovisual sector at European and national levels. The third and final section of the Handbook features initiatives taken by industry stakeholders in different EU countries and at different places in the creative value chain to promote the presence of women and of other underrepresented groups on screen and on air, as well as in the workforce.

Gender equality and the empowerment of women is an objective backed by strategies and action plans at global and regional levels. It is one of the 2015 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and has been enshrined in the EU Treaties since 1957. Girls and boys, women and men should have the same opportunities and receive equal treatment. In the professional environment, there should be no discrimination - be it in pay levels, in opportunities for career development or in access to leadership. If the situation of women has very much improved in the last decades, especially in our European societies, much remains to be done to reach full equality. In the European Union, the employment rate of women is still 11.5 percentage lower than the one of men². Across the EU the gender pay gap is on average of 16% while the gender pension gap reaches 37%³. This is a result of many factors: women are concentrated in lower level and lower paid jobs, they take longer career breaks, and are more likely to choose part-time work to reconcile work and care responsibilities.

¹ The Good Practice Handbook is a joint initiative of: the Association of Commercial Television in Europe (ACT), the Association of European Radios (AER), the European Broadcasting Union (EBU), the European Audiovisual Production Association (CEPI), the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ), the International Federation of Actors (FIA), the International Federation of Film Producers Associations (FIAPF), the International Federation of Musicians (FIM) and UNI Europa - Media, Entertainment & Arts (EURO-MEI).

² [2019 Report on equality between women and men in the EU](#), Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2019

³ [Tackling the gender pay gap: not without a better work-life balance - Research note](#), European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), May 2019

The gender statistics available for the European Audiovisual sector show important levels of imbalances between women and men. In the media, women are still underrepresented in leadership roles, even though numbers have been improving in the last years in some sectors such as in Public Service Media (from 15% of women CEO in 2015 to 31% in 2019⁴). In Film & TV production, there is also a gap in career perspectives between women and men. If the numbers are relatively balanced when leaving educational institutions, the percentage of women active in the professional environment decreases as years go by. This is especially remarkable for women directors, for which we have the highest amount of statistics at both European and national levels. Across the EU the proportion of films directed by women stands between 10% and 30% depending on the country⁵. When national statistics are available for the extended film crew, such as in France⁶ or in the UK⁷, data shows that key creative roles are also mostly occupied by men and that there is still an important segregation between 'masculine' and 'feminine' roles. This has an impact on pay levels which are, for example, 42.3% lower for women directors in comparison to their male counterparts in film production in France. In Sweden, film statistics have shown a very large budget gap between projects created by men and by women⁸.

Statistics on the diversity of profiles on screen/air and in the European audiovisual workforce are not as easy to produce as gender statistics and are available for a limited number of EU countries only. When available, though⁹, they do reveal strong imbalances, for example in the representation of people with disabilities, from different sexual orientations or from different ethnic backgrounds.

The good practices presented in the Handbook highlight the wealth of actions that can be taken by audiovisual stakeholders to address the different dimensions of gender inequality (biased gender portrayal, structural discriminations in recruitment and career progressions, gender pay gap, unbalanced caring responsibilities, etc.) as well as to promote diversity. Those good practices also demonstrate that all kinds of organisations – whether big or small – can act and have an impact at their level to promote equality, to make sure that workplaces are safe from sexual harassment and that all forms of discriminations, also on the grounds of age, disability, sexual orientation, ethnic background or social origins, are recognised and worked on.

The good practices presented in the publication are organised in thematic chapters that illustrate the sequence of actions to be followed if real progress on the gender equality front are to be achieved.

First, long-term impact and structural change only happen when gender equality strategies and policies are backed with relevant human and financial resources and are implemented in a consistent way. Gender equality policies must also rely on a regular collection of statistics: gender equality strategies without targets or gender equality targets without monitoring have proven of poor effect. Successful examples of policies and action plans, rooted in data and regularly monitored, are highlighted in the publication, coming from France, Spain, the UK, Austria, and Sweden.

⁴ EBU's Media Intelligence Service - Gender Equality and PSM Report, March 2019

⁵ [Dynamic study of European female filmmakers, Update 2019, English summary](#), Le Lab Femmes de Cinéma, November 2019

⁶ [La place des femmes dans l'industrie cinématographique et audiovisuelle – les études du CNC](#), Direction des études, des statistiques et de la prospective du CNC et le Service Pilotage & Statistiques d'Audiens, March 2019

⁷ [Cut out of the Picture - A study of gender inequality amongst film directors in the UK film industry](#), Directors UK, May 2016

⁸ [The Money Issue Gender Equality Report 2018](#), Swedish Film Institute

⁹ See, for example, the Directors UK report of September 2018 entitled '[Adjusting the Colour Balance – Black, Asian and minority ethnic representation among screen directors working in UK television](#)', the BBC [Equality Information report 2017/2018](#), the [reports on ethnic, social and geographic diversity](#) from the Danish Film Institute or the [reports of the Observatory of Diversity](#) set up by the 'Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel' in France (CSA, the audiovisual regulator)

Raising awareness on gender equality and committing people and organisations to change is a second essential element of any sector strategy. To achieve sustainable change within its own structures but also through the images it shows and the stories it tells, the European audiovisual sector has to make visible and understandable the structural discrimination that still persist between women and men. In this perspective, different types of actions have been experimented across Europe and are presented in the publication: a broad partnership to combat stereotyping in the media in the Netherlands, a campaign on the impact of long hours in the UK, a sector-level coalition in Norway, a pledge for equality adopted by festivals across the globe.

The use of public funding is another important factor of change that has proven to be a powerful and virtuous tool, as it can encourage the sector to transform some of the traditional patterns that lead to imbalances. The specific role of film funding bodies and of public service media is featured in the publication, with an overview of the catalogues of actions that have been experimented by those organisations to promote gender equality – and sometimes diversity – in different EU countries.

In the aftermath of #metoo new actions and partnerships have seen the light in the European audiovisual sector to combat sexual harassment. Promoting safe work environments and addressing the underlying inequalities and unbalanced power structures revealed by sexual harassment is another central element of any gender equality strategies. The Handbook presents some particularly interesting initiatives implemented in the UK, in Sweden and in Germany.

The publication also argues that, in addition to raising awareness, setting targets, monitoring progress, and correcting the power and representation unbalances, audiovisual stakeholders have to change the way they work on a daily basis if they wish to achieve genuine and lasting change on the gender equality front. Examples of smaller-scale actions that can have a great impact on gender equality are featured in the Handbook, such as: child-care services in festivals, support to parents/carers in the workplace and in work processes, gender equality objectives and actions in film schools, databases of women professionals and targets of women experts on screen and air, or commercial rebates for women-led projects.

Finally, when addressing the issue of the unbalanced representation of women and men and at the time of designing strategies and action plans to address this unbalance, sector stakeholders should not lose the opportunity to also tackle other misrepresentations and discriminations, be it ethnic, cultural, social or grounded in religion, age, sexual orientation or disability. Several strong and interesting actions have already been experimented in different EU countries to promote diversity and are presented in the Handbook (partnerships with education, strategies to integrate disabled staff, LGBTI support groupes, etc.). More work will be demanded in the coming years to develop the actions of the audiovisual sector at the levels needed to properly address this important issue.

To conclude, the range of actions that audiovisual stakeholders can take to improve gender equality and diversity is broad. However, more resources will be needed in the years to come for the production of regular gender and diversity statistics and to support sector stakeholders in the implementation of more targeted actions: in their workplaces, on sets and in studios, and in relation to their audiences.

In the coming years - in line with the commitment they demonstrated at the time of adopting the Framework of Actions on Gender Equality in 2011, a commitment renewed when preparing this publication - the social partners of the European Audiovisual Social Dialogue Committee will continue to promote actions in the field of gender equality and diversity together, with their members and all other sector stakeholders

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