

Press release from 03.07.2024

## **Fourth KIDS Regio Forum Calls for More Support for European Children's Films**

**(Erfurt, 3 July 2024) Over 60 experts from a record 25 European countries gathered in Erfurt, Germany, last week to participate in the fourth edition of the KIDS Regio Forum. At the conclusion of the event, future steps for the initiative, based on the results of the Forum, were announced.**

Held every five years, the main objective of this year's Forum was to enhance political support for European children's films. The motto "Building Bridges" illustrates the desire to better connect various decision-making levels and stakeholders, ensuring the recognition of the social and cultural significance of children's films within the broader context of film and cultural policy. The KIDS Regio Forum serves as a platform for participants to gain a deeper understanding of each other's needs, acknowledging that they are part of a community sharing many similarities and challenges.

It became clear in Erfurt that there is a genuine need for sharing knowledge, values, experiences, best practices and, crucially, data with important stakeholders. Better communication is essential to raise awareness about the children's film sector. Effective lobbying requires hard evidence that EU values are being promoted, as well as a structure to co-ordinate joint initiatives, create campaigns and facilitate permanent dialogue among different stakeholders, supporting synergies. At the end of the KIDS Regio Forum, it was decided to organise a virtual feedback gathering among participants in August to discuss the next steps. Furthermore, the initiative will be present in Brussels with an EU Parliamentary Breakfast in the autumn.

Significant strides have already been made in data collection through the exchange of information between KIDS Regio, the European Children's Film Association (ECFA) and the European Audiovisual Observatory. Key insights from this exchange, including data on production figures in various European countries, film releases and audience statistics, were presented at the Forum. Participants deliberated on the availability of quantitative data related to children's films and how it can be effectively utilised in advocating for young people's cinema and production.

Valuable anthropological data on young audiences was presented in the keynote of the research "Keeping up with Children as an Audience", a collaborative project between Will&Agency/publikum.io and KIDS Regio. This groundbreaking study involved 374 children aged 7-11 across 12 European territories. The results stem from qualitative interviews, complemented by quantitative research.

Initial findings reveal that watching films is a socially-oriented experience: at home, it has become a shared activity with family members. When children visit the cinema, their focus shifts to the overall experience. Across all territories, the research highlights more similarities than differences among young audiences. This global generation shares tendencies and seeks similar elements, exhibiting consistent preferences in their film and series consumption. The research indicates that children, regardless of age or nationality, quickly outgrow content specifically made for them, deeming it too childish, as they seek inspiration from slightly older characters and more complex narratives.

The full "Keeping up with Children as an Audience" study, along with the KIDS Regio Forum report and the processed data on production and distribution of European children's films, is slated for publication during this year's Cinekid for Professionals at the end of October. KIDS Regio will also be present at many other festivals and industry events, such as the Just Film Industry Days as part of the

Black Nights Film Festival in Tallinn in November and the KIDS Regio Berlinale Meeting Point on 15 February 2025 in Berlin.

The KIDS Regio Forum 2024 took place under the patronage of the European Parliament and the President of Eurimages, Catherine Trautmann. It is supported by the Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung (MDM), the State Chancellery of Thuringia, and Will&Agency/publikum.io. The organiser is the German Children's Media Foundation, Goldener Spatz.

Other supporting partners include: European Children's Film Association, Film'On, Vlaams Audiovisueel Fonds (VAF), Black Nights Film Festival, Greek Film Center, Olympia International Film Festival, Thessaloniki International Film Festival, Fondazione Cineteca di Bologna, Film Centre of Montenegro, Cinekid Foundation Amsterdam, Netherlands Film Fund, Nordnorsk Filmsenter, Tromsø International Film Festival, Stowarzyszenie Nowe Horyzonty, TECLA PLAY Associação Cultural, Film i Skåne, Zürcher Filmstiftung, FFilm Cymru Wales, Wicked Wales Film, Creative Europe Desks Berlin-Brandenburg, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Czech Republic, and North Rhine-Westphalia.

## **About KIDS Regio**

KIDS Regio is a lobbying initiative for high-quality and diverse European children's films, serving as a mediator between politics and society, the film industry, and the scientific world. Its focus is on improving the status, recognition, and diversity of European productions, co-productions, and distribution for children's films. Representatives of the European children's film industry come together to discuss key topics to promote children's film as a cultural asset within a diverse film landscape. KIDS Regio is a project of the German Children's Media Foundation GOLDENER SPATZ and an initiative of Cine Regio, the network of regional film funding organisations in Europe. The initiative is supported by the Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung (MDM) and the Thuringian State Chancellery. For more information, please visit our website at [www.kids-regio.org](http://www.kids-regio.org).

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Best regards,

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