

Press Release, 31.10.2024

## KIDS Regio presents “European Children’s Film in Focus” report

(Amsterdam/Erfurt, 31 October 2024) **Full results of a comprehensive Europe-wide study containing key insights into how young audiences today engage with film and media were unveiled by KIDS Regio today as part of Cinekid’s opening address.**

Conducted in collaboration with Denmark’s publikum.io and presented under the “Keeping Up With Children as an Audience” title, the study examines the media consumption of 374 children aged 7-11 in 12 European territories, exploring how film and television impact their lives.

From the research, 10 key findings emerge:

1. Thinking about 7-to-11-year-old children as one homogenous target group is tricky. **Although there’s only four years between youngest and oldest, they are worlds apart;**
2. Born as digital natives in a global entertainment landscape, **children today view screens as their primary gateway to media consumption.** Films are just another form of content accessed through technology - essentially longer videos available on streaming services, conveniently positioned alongside other apps such as YouTube or TikTok;
3. Children navigating through assessing thumbnails, watching previews or trying out the first few seconds. This way, they feel they can maintain control in selecting from the bigger shelf of content. **The last thing children want is adults choosing for them;**
4. Children **love to watch stories about young characters, preferably a few years older than themselves.** However, if it becomes too obvious that the film or series is made ‘for them’, it can quickly become a major turn-off;
5. **By mixing elements from different genres,** films offer a rich and multifaceted viewing experience. It allows children to find and connect with story aspects that resonate with them;
6. Children **seek stories that reflect their own growth and transformation, featuring characters who evolve and adapt.** Characters who remain static or ‘stuck’ are perceived as childish or unengaging;
7. Children **seek stories that reflect their own feelings and experiences but also transport them to worlds where the ordinary becomes extraordinary.** This combination allows them to explore complex emotions within the safe, yet thrilling, confines of a fantastical setting;
8. Children **enjoy discovering new information or skills as part of an engaging storyline.** They appreciate stories that subtly weave educational elements into the narrative without making them the focal point;
9. **Watching a film together at home forms an opportunity for family bonding.** The cinema experience, however, is valued by children not only for the film, but

also for the unique environment, the big screen and peripheral experience it provides;

10. **Differences in preference are determined by age rather than by nationality or gender**, and while local nuances which shape country-specific preferences can be identified, young European audiences share more similarities than differences.

Besides the 10 key findings, the KIDS Regio Forum final report also presents a series of actionable recommendations to enable an effective and sustainable change in the European children's film industry:

1. **Young audiences should be prioritised** through positive discrimination in the allocation of funding for children's films, both on a national and a European level.
2. **The need for pan-European co-operation** via a European Children's Cinema Network, inspired by the successful national model in Sweden.
3. **The importance of regular data collection and analysis** to have more robust evidence on children's film production, distribution and audiences is essential for informed decision-making and advocacy.

All of this underlines how the alignment of stakeholders and resources is fundamental.

The study is published as part of the "Building Bridges - European Children's Film in Focus" final report of the fourth edition of KIDS Regio Forum. The event took place in June when close to 60 experts from 25 European countries gathered in the German city of Erfurt to discuss the future of children's cinema. They underlined the importance of films in the shaping of perspective for young audiences in Europe, fostering understanding, empathy and values.

The outcomes and the report will now serve as a basis for ongoing dialogue and collaboration to further the development of children's cinema in Europe, thereby reinforcing the values of democracy, diversity and cultural identity. KIDS Regio aims to build on the momentum of this year's Forum to engage in broader conversations on the issues discussed. The publication invites collaboration from industry members and policy makers across Europe.

For more information and to access the digital or print version of the report, please visit our website at [www.kids-regio.org](http://www.kids-regio.org).

## About KIDS Regio

KIDS Regio aims to promote the cultural, educational and artistic value of European children's films, recognising their role in shaping young people's perspectives and cultivating shared values. Children's films reflect diverse lives and cultures, making them essential for young audiences across Europe.

By fostering collaboration and strategic partnerships, KIDS Regio connects industry professionals, policy makers and advocates to advance the children's film sector.

Through the KIDS Regio Forum and ongoing dialogue, stakeholders are empowered to develop strategies that reflect Europe's diversity. Throughout the year, KIDS Regio engages in research, events and advocacy to keep children's film at the heart of Europe's cultural landscape. Through collective action, the initiative works to ensure a sustainable and thriving future for children's cinema.

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 Mitteldeutsche Medienförderung (MDM) and the State Chancellery of Thuringia.

This year's KIDS Regio Forum in June took place under the patronage of the European Parliament and Catherine Trautmann, President of Eurimages,

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Kind regards

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