

Questions to Charlotte Appelgren, General secretary, Cine-Regio

- What are the main objectives of Cine-Regio ?

Our objectives in Cine-Regio are threefold and interlinked:

First and foremost it is about knowledge-sharing. The exchange of information and knowledge is the real core of Cine-Regio. We have three fixed platforms a year where the Cine-Regio representatives meet. We also produce an annual Focus report/study on a topic of relevance to our members (in 2008 the topic was on “The Distribution Revolution”). In the long-term we will aim to function as a knowledge-centre – not only for regional film funds - but also for the film sector.

Secondly, Cine-Regio is involved in film policy making. In particular we are promoting and representing the regional film funds’ interests at the European and international level. We need to have a voice within the institutions which play a role in determining the set of rules and conditions for regional film funds in Europe. One of the main challenges so far and in the years to come for public film funding in Europe is the issue of State Aid for Cinema.

Our third objective is co-productions. Cine-Regio encourages interregional and cross-border co-operation to strengthen the co-development and co-production of audiovisual products.

- How many coproductions are born in Cine-Regio since its creation ?

It is important to note that Cine-Regio do not provide funding to the film sector. Each member is acting independently. However, despite Cine-Regio being a relatively young network , I can list more than 30 co-productions where two or more Cine-Regio members have supported the same film title. And there is an increasing number of co-productions taking place at the interregional level.

All Cine-Regio members deliver a range of schemes to the film sector which aim to support film culture, build social cohesion and promote local cultural identity. However, the decision making process, the artistic evaluation and the financial schemes offered differs from fund to fund. In order to provide an overview to the European film sector – we have listed all members on our website – incl. basic information and with links to more detailed information.

- What are the main difficulties in coproductions ?

There are many difficulties and challenges which come with co-producing across border, including potential clashes between crews of mixed nationalities and differing cultural backgrounds, language problems and challenges in matching and fulfilling the terms, conditions and guidelines of all the various sources of finance. However, it is important to stress that co-producing do provide many great benefits to producers, such as enlarging financial opportunities which in turn could reduce financial risks and secure greater distribution and exploitation, provide better access to talent from other regions and open production opportunities which otherwise would not have existed.

Cross-border and interregional co-productions are most effective when partners have a clear understanding of the opportunities and dangers involved in co-producing. Only by sharing knowledge and experience between us will we be able to increase the number of successful co-productions, and thus expand their considerable potential.

This is why we on our website have an area dedicated to the topic of « co-productions ». Here we list a number of case-studies on recent film titles which have been supported by minimum two Cine-Regio members. By presenting these case-studies we hope to increase the transparency on how film projects can be financed involving regional film funding.

- How do you measure the efficiency of Cine-Regio ?

Many pan-European organisations are convinced that regional film support is vital to foster the development of the European audiovisual sector.

In contrast to a few years ago – it is now without doubt that regional film support fosters increased local cultural identities, cultural diversity, democratic empowerment and promotes image and media literacy in the European regions.

- In this competitive world, is there sometimes a competition between Cine-Regio members?

Cine-Regio is here to foster collaborations, develop competencies and raise a joint voice – unhealthy competition is not an issue. We are convinced that together you are stronger, and there are more advantages by joining forces.

All members have a passion for film, and they recognise culture's role as a catalyst for growth, employment and competitiveness in their region and as a foundation for cultural and economic development. The directors of Europe's regional film agencies have a responsibility for developing and implementing coherent film policies and have an important role to ensure that Europe's regional cultures and creative potential are expressed in the audiovisual media of film and television.