



European Institute for
Comparative Cultural Research

Culture-Biz – the Project and its Main Results¹

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Culture-Biz: Bridging the Priorities of the Lisbon Strategy and EU Social Agenda

Culture-Biz is the third in a series of reports prepared by the European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research (ERICarts) and its partners. All three aimed at investigating how diversity could be achieved through equality in European cultural labour markets.

The first ERICarts report, “Pyramid or Pillars” was published in the latter half of the 90s when equal opportunities between men and women became a founding principle of the Treaty of Amsterdam of the European Union (Articles 2, 3, 13 and 141) and one of the four main pillars of the European Employment Strategy (EES). The second report, “Culture-Gates” was published in 2003, when new European Employment Guidelines (EEG) were established by the European Council as a tool to implement the goals set out in the Lisbon Strategy. The concept of “gender mainstreaming” was introduced into the guidelines as one of its main principles calling on member states to take gender equality into account in all areas of priority outlined in the EEG. Since the EEG did not identify the necessary instruments and tools which would ensure the implementation of the gender mainstreaming approach as an integral part of Member States national employment action plans, questions were raised as to whether the EES guidelines could really be considered a success for the principle of gender equality as laid out in the Amsterdam Treaty. The third report, “Culture-Biz”, has been published in the context of the pending revisions to the Directives on “equal opportunities” and on “working time” and in line with the renewed “Lisbon Strategy” of the EU.

The results of “Culture-Biz” help to bridge the the economic focus of the Lisbon Strategy (culture industries) with the Commission`s Social Agenda (to promote gender equality) by examining the potential for women to achieve decision-making positions at different stages of the culture industries value chain and by comparing their status in large, medium and small sized companies making up the film production and book publishing sectors.

Methodological Framework

Figure 1 below provides an overview of the main actors involved in and influences effecting the development of the culture industries in Europe, not only on the national but also on the inter-national/global level. Quantitative and qualitative indicators were developed on the basis of this scheme.

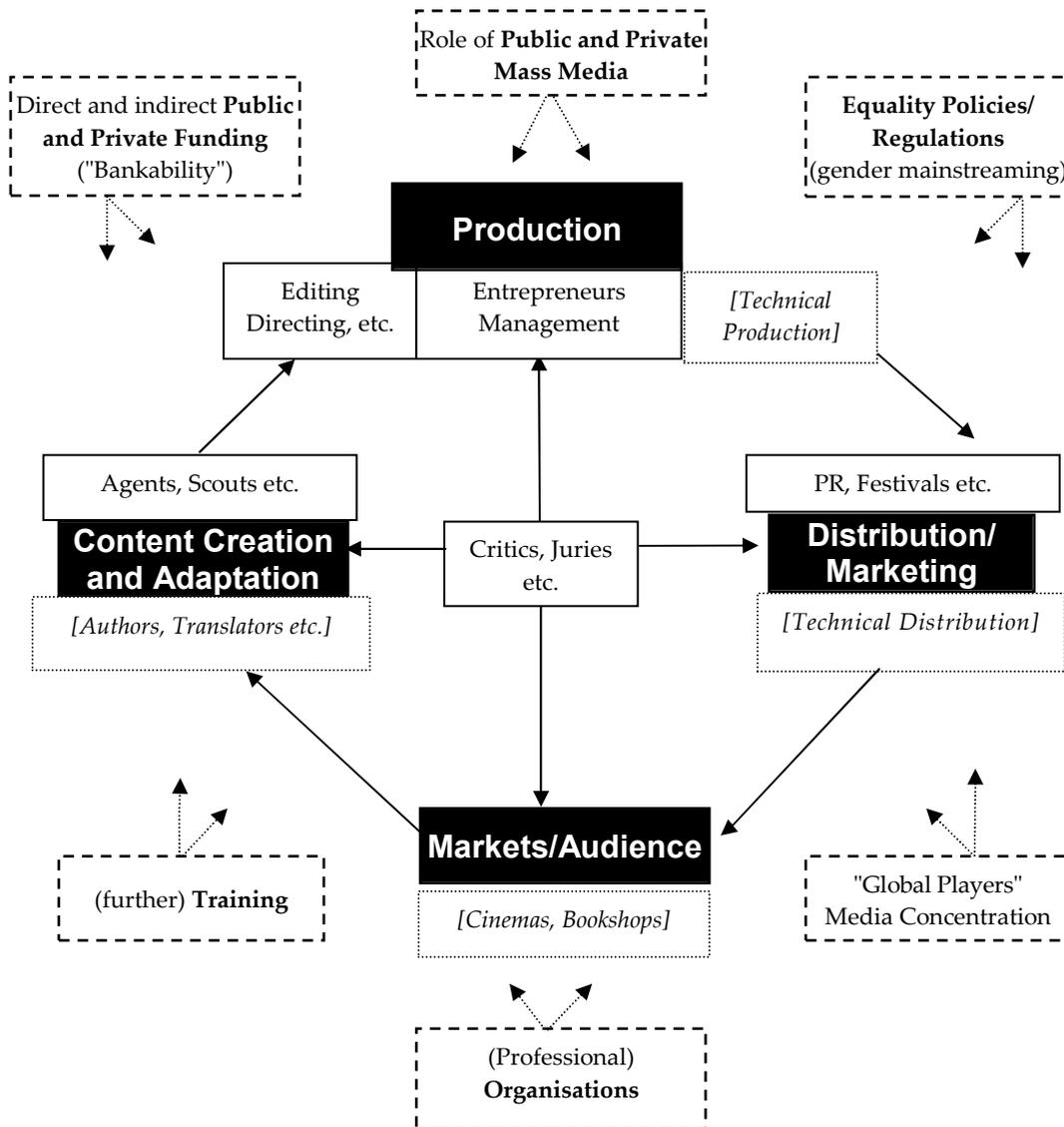
¹ This text summarizes the findings of the Report on a two-years project for the European Commission, conducted by the European Institute for Comparative Cultural Research (ERICarts) with the participation of Finn-Ekvit (Helsinki), Mediacult (Vienna,), Observatorio das Actividades Culturais (Lisbon) and Zentrum für Kulturforschung (Bonn). The book edition has been published as “Culture-Biz”, ISBN 3-930395-70-3 by ARCult Media, Bonn 2005. Internet information on www.gender-research.net

² “Men decide, women control...”

The Culture-Biz research teams assembled information from existing sector studies, collected primary gendered data and conducted interviews with relevant actors making up this complex landscape in order to determine:

- Structural changes or developments in film production and book publishing and how they may or may not effect the position of women working in these markets;
- Professional career paths of men and women working in these two branches;
- What "success" means to film production and book publishing professionals; and
- The location of glass-ceilings preventing women's advancement into top positions.

Figure 1: Main Actors and other Influences Examined by "Culture-Biz"



Legend:

Editing...
Positions studied in greater detail

[Technical Production]
Positions which are not the focus of the study

"Global Players"
Intervening influences studied

Source: ERICarts: Culture-Biz, 2005.

Mapping the Contents of the Culture-Biz Project

This report is organised in two parts - Part I (book publishing) and Part II (film-biz) - and present the results from Culture-Biz Austria, Finland, Germany and Portugal which are organised in their own chapters and are preceded by a comparison of the main results.

Each of the national studies provide an overview of the ownership and structure of large, medium, small sized companies and the main developments and trends in both industries over a ten year period. "Voices from the Field" and case studies which present examples of "good and bad practice" in the Culture-Biz countries are found throughout the individual chapters. Below is an overview of more sector specific information collected by the Culture-Biz teams.

Part I – Women in Book Publishing

The national studies contain gendered labour market data derived from national statistical offices to determine the share of women working in the publishing sector. The original intent was to cross check this data with members of their respective professional associations. However, given the fact that companies rather than individuals form the membership of professional publishing associations, it was not possible to rely on this "typical" source of information. Data was collected on those studying relevant literature/publishing/business courses as a means to project the composition of the labour market in the next five years.

The focus of attention then turned to examine the internal composition of company staff. In which positions are women working? The national teams examined key positions in the 5 largest/most important book publishing companies in their country for fiction (or those which include fiction as a main component of their programme). The share of women in the following positions were examined: owners, CEO`s, executive directors, head of fiction departments, directors of production (technical), distribution and marketing and editors-in-chief. A sample was also taken of small and medium sized publishing companies.

Referring to the model above, information was collected on the share of female "gate-keepers" such as book critics in newspapers, magazines, radio/TV, jury members issuing major book prizes and selection committee members giving grants to writers. This data was compared to the share of women as "prize winners".

Part II – Women in the Film Business

The national studies contain gendered labour market data derived from national statistical offices to determine the share of women working in the film business. This information was cross checked with data on the share of female members of professional associations for directors, producers, screenwriters, editors and directors of photography. Data was collected on those studying at the main film academies in the different countries as a means to project the composition of the labour market in the next five years.

Similar to the field of book publishing, the national teams examined the internal composition of staff in mainly small to medium sized film production companies. In order to gain more insight into the creative positions held by women, the Culture-Biz teams examined the share of women working on publicly funded feature, short and documentary film productions as directors, producers, editors, screenwriters and directors of photography over a ten year period. They also examined the film programmes of national broadcasting companies.

Three different types of gate-keepers operating in the film business were examined - individuals (critics), groups (e.g. evaluation committees) or platforms (e.g. film festivals) – to determine the share of female gate-keepers on the one hand and the effects of their decisions on the recognition of women as creative professionals (artists) on the other.

European Comparisons

Each of the two main parts of this book are preceded by a comparative overview of the main findings. These are set in a wider framework which takes into consideration developments throughout Europe as a whole. The comparative chapters are based on information provided in the national studies and include an assessment of relevant Europe wide programmes, data/information from companies dominating the European landscape as well as platforms which serve as meeting points in Europe for both book publishers and film makers such as the Frankfurt Book Fair or the Cannes Film Festival.

One clear message coming from the reports is that the share of women in various occupations in both the film and publishing business does not generally meet their overall share in the labour market and that there are fewer work places available for the amount of male and female students graduating in either artistic or business related programmes. This means that many graduates find work outside of their field of study and can not be located within these statistics.

A Sneak Preview of Results

Each of the chapters conclude with sector and country specific observations and recommendations which are relevant for private companies, national broadcasting organisations, professionals working on both the “biz” and “creative” side of the industries, professional associations, university professors and students. Here we provide a sneak preview for the more curious.

Do women hold decision-making positions in book publishing and film production companies?

Yes. There is an increasing number of women with a business and marketing background who are entering the cultural labour market and who are moving at greater speed up the corporate ladder from lower to middle management positions.

Do women still face glass ceilings in their pursuit of a career in larger companies?

Yes. While there are more women working in middle management positions, they face glass ceilings on their way up to the executive level and, particularly, power circles of top management. In cases where women have successfully broken through the glass ceilings, they face *glass walls* which divide men and women on the top executive floors of large companies; many of which are family owned enterprises. This means that women more often occupy executive positions related to marketing, communication, sales, human resources, administration, financing, while men remain in the most powerful and prestigious executive positions of President, CEO, Chairman etc. Some of them have been motivated to leave these traditional company structures to set up their own businesses.

Are there more opportunities for women in small to medium sized companies?

Yes. There are more and more women entrepreneurs setting up their own businesses in response to a stagnant career path in larger companies and to give themselves the opportunity to advance their own ideas and projects, have more flexible work schedules and to try and achieve a work-life-balance. Despite advancements made in political documents to recognise the need to develop measures enabling a work-life-balance, there are many more men than women in executive positions with families and children. Some examples of good practice were found in the Culture-Biz study, such as in-house kindergartens or flexible working programmes, however, they are more the exception than the rule. Women who run their own companies tend to employ more women than male owned companies.

Do digital technologies provide new opportunities?

Yes. New technologies enable a greater number of persons – especially women - to become entrepreneurs and to set up low investment and risk companies which rely less on intermediaries. Advancements in digital technologies, for example, enable individual writers to publish their own books or film makers to produce and edit their own (mainly documentary) films at lower costs.

Are there more women “gate-keepers” and do they open doors for other women?

Yes and No. Gate-keepers are those which set professional standards and have the power to determine or define a “successful work”; the latter has implications for what content e.g. a book or film is published, financed or produced. While the number of women on, for example, selection committees of grant giving bodies has increased, the results show that this does not necessarily lead to an increase in the number of women receiving grants. The same is true for award juries giving important prizes at, for example, film festivals.

Do women have equal access to public funding for their projects?

Yes, But.... While competitions do not restrict women from applying, the fact remains that there is a lower share of women submitting their projects for funding than men. When they do, they receive less money than their male colleagues. Figures from the most prestigious institutions with the largest budgets show the lowest share of women among funding recipients – support institutions with the lowest budgets show the highest share of women among funding recipients.

Do women occupy positions as “career facilitators”?

Not necessarily. Professors and other mentors or role models providing, for example, students with contacts to companies, networks or funding institutions, are predominately men. There are very few examples of mentoring programmes within the industries designed specifically to encourage women at the beginning or middle of the career path. Male professors can help to change this situation by making their own efforts to involve more female colleagues as guest lecturers or to show their works as part of an awareness raising strategy.

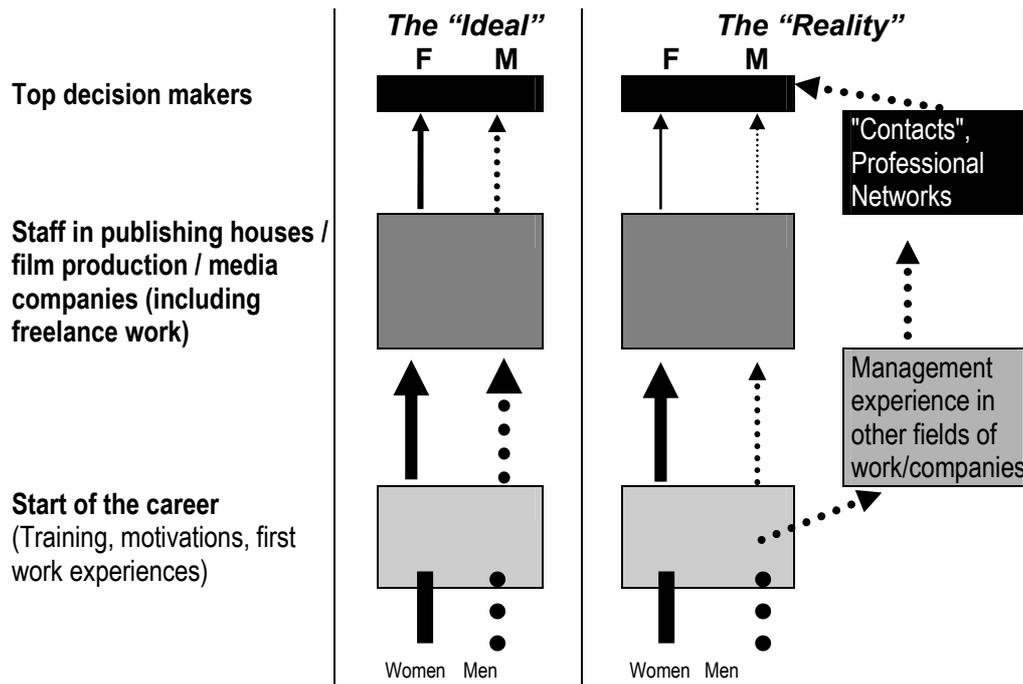
Are there “boys networks” which present obstacles to the advancement of women’s careers?

Yes. The upper ranks of the main media corporations are controlled by “boys networks” which are increasingly hiring top management staff from other economic/business sectors whose emphasis is more on the “biz” bottom line than on content development (see Fig. 2 below). Male cartels also found among the circles of critics for the leading literary and film press and in some professional organisations, e.g. film directors and producers, literary societies etc., which demotivate women from becoming members. There is, however, an increasing number of women who are setting up their own professional networks (e.g. women in publishing) or personal (informal) networks with other women.

Do gender stereotypes persist?

Yes, especially in certain fields of study (e.g. literature) and occupational fields (producers of children`s films). One of the main obstacles to overcome is the perpetuating male image or perception of an artist (film side), an intellectual (book publishing) or a top executive. This continues to be an impenetrable barrier for many women.

Figure 1: Typical career paths of women and men in publishing and media companies



Source: ERICarts: Culture-Biz, 2005.

The results of Culture-Biz show that the work started by the ERICarts Institute and its partners in the 90s on the status of women in the cultural labour market in Europe needs to continue. While progress is reported in different occupational fields, gender balance in the sector as a whole has not been achieved and there are strong feminisation processes in certain occupations with low status and low pay. Greater transparency is needed through the constant monitoring of developments to combat stereotypes and a lack of awareness about the contribution of female professionals on both the "biz" and especially on the "creative side" of the culture industries. The newly announced European Gender Equality Institute of the EU needs to also remember the culture sector when designing its programme to regularly collect data and information and monitor gender equality in Europe.