Universität Rostock

Traditio et Innovatio

The Gender Data Gap

Missing gender data in the creative sector & how to bridge the gap.

A Workshop at the University of Rostock, Institute for Media Research

organized by Prof. Dr. Elizabeth Prommer & Yvonne de Andrés

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1. Gender & Cultural and Creative Sector (CCS)

Working within the framework of the German EU Council Presidency, an international workshop on "how to bridge the gender data gap in the cultural and creative sector" (CCS) was held in December 2020. This document summarizes the workshop and captures the workshop´s recommendations for action. A group of 42 international gender equality experts - drawn from the culture and creative industries and across the sectors as in arts, performing arts, music and literature - gathered to highlight the problems and discuss potential solutions.

A concerning baseline was the lack of systematic data and lack of comparative research on gender inequality per sector across Europe, which has been identified prior by previous workshops, research and working papers (e.g. Vecco et al. 2019, Murphy et al. 2019). A call for interdisciplinary research on gender equality and sharing of best practices and examples between EU Member States has been formulated. Summarizing available research about women in the cultural and creative sectors, the scope of the workshop focused on how to fill the gaps in gender data. The aims were:

1. Identify the type of data, that is necessary to improve gender equality parity in the CCS (Culture and Creative Sector).

2. Provide insight on how to collect necessary statistical data on the gender gap in the creative sector within Europe. Identify the potential barriers to collection of data.

3. Are there "best practice" examples that we can identify?

4. What recommendations and actions can be proposed?

To resolve the issue of insufficient data the focus lies on how to generate and collect comparable EU-wide data regarding:

- Access to the creative sector and the arts labour market.
- Access to decision-making and leadership positions.
- Access to resources (funding)
- the gender pay gap.

The cultural and creative sectors (CCS) under consideration are music, performing arts (including theatre, dance, opera), visual arts, literature, and related culture managing professions such as museum directors, curators, and heads of cultural institutions. The geographic scope covers the EU member states with an emphasis on France, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Spain and the UK.

The film industry was identified as a "best practice" example, since there exists some comparable EU-wide data. Even if the data does not cover all functions and all aspects, some are covered by the EWA study from 2017, or research by the European Audiovisual Observatory. A brief summary will give insight into the EU wide available data. The following paper is structured by the guiding questions:

- What data do we need to assess gender parity in the cultural sector?
- Why do we not have this data? Where are the barriers and problems in data collection?
- What would be the criteria for data collection?
- What solutions can we propose to close the data gap?

In the workshop, we explored the above questions with experts from the cultural and creative industries. Specialist subgroups discussed the performing arts, literature, music, and fine arts.

Keynotes and Input by:

Prof. Dr. Elizabeth Prommer, Director of the Institut für Media Research, University of Rostock, Germany
Prof. Dr. Marilena Vecco, Professor for Entrepreneurship Burgundy Business School, Dijon, France
Flavia Barca, President of Acume, Member of the Italian Film and Audiovisual Council at Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism in Italy (Mibact)
Nina George, Autor, President European Writers Council, Germany – France
Nicola Bramkamp, Artistic Director BURNING ISSUES - Performing Arts & Equality, Germany
Dr. Victoria Durrer, Lecturer/ Assistant Professor (Ad Astra Fellow) School of Art History and Cultural Policy, University College Dublin, Ireland
Katha Alexi, expert for the music sector, Institute for Media Research, University of Rostock, Germany
Venjune Zemaityte, Senior Research Fellow, Baltic Film, Media, Arts and Communication School (BFM), Tallinn University
Carlos Collado Seidel, German Spanish historian, Universität Marburg, PEN-Zentrum Germany, Secretary General from 2017 to 2019
Prof. Dr. Doris Eickhof, Professor of Cultural Economy & Policy. University of Glasgow, United Kingdom

2.   Gender inequality in the Cultural and Creative Sectors

Several studies and papers have highlighted gender inequality in the CCS and examined the reasons. The analysis "Gender gaps in the Cultural and Creative Sectors" by Vecco et al. (2020) researched several sectors, such as music, performing arts (including theater, dance, opera, and circus), visual arts, cultural heritage and related professions, literature and publishing, architecture and design, arts and crafts and the field of cultural education. The geographic focus of the study was on the EU member states and the United Kingdom.

Across the different sub-sectors of the CCS, some types of gender inequality are more prevalent in some subsectors than others. Some of the drivers of gender gaps are cross-sectoral and universal, compared with some drivers which are more sector specific to each creative field. Most drivers interact with other drivers and can work to reinforce (or undermine and lessen), some of the gender gaps discussed.

Vecco et al. (2020) identified the following aspects for the gender gaps in the CCS:

Gender gaps in decision making and leadership positions as well as resources and status levels:
- Men tend to be more prevalent in more prestigious decision making, and creative leadership positions;
- Men tend to be in charge of more commercially prestigious or famous cultural institutions (even in sectors where women outnumber men in absolute numbers).
- Women have less access to the labour and art markets.
- Decision making and leadership positions - women are much less represented in decision-making and leadership roles in the cultural and creative sectors, excepting dance sector.
- The creative output produced by women tends to be less valued or appreciated compared with output by men.
- Women have less access to resources and there is a gender pay gap.
- Linked to resources are other gaps such as lack of access to networks, mentors, time and financial resources to self-promote and travel, and thus bring in new creative and cultural projects and work.
- Lack of access to such resource also undermines a person's ability to advance in the sector. Women, by virtue of sectoral stereotypes and certain working practices specific to the CCSs have, on average, less access to these resources.

- Other features of the CCSs which impact the labour market, include the flexible, project- based, freelance styles of working which can limit women`s labour access.

There are four main contextual factors that drive and facilitate sexual harrasment: competition for work, industry culture, gendered power relations, and the importance of informal networks (Hennekam and Bennett, 2017).

Paradox: contrary to the cool, informal, accessible and egalitarian reputation of the cultural and creative sectors, there are in fact more hidden hierarchies and power relations, these seemingly more prevalent in these sectors than in other economic sectors.

The drivers behind these gender gaps
Most of the gender gaps originate from gendered stereotypes:
- "Social expectations"
- "Social models" (women still presumed to take on the lion's share of home care responsibilities)
- "Lack of visibility" of the gender gap issues (#MeToo) - CCEs features (informal way of working, importance of networking, self-promotion, project-based and unstable employment, as well as the travel usually involved and high competition, helps to give way to gendered trends in employment)

„Across the different sub-sectors of the CCSs, some types of gender inequality are more prevalent in some subsectors than others. Some of the drivers of gender gaps are - cross- sectoral and quite universal, compared to some drivers which are more sector specific - interact with other drivers and can work to reinforce (or undermine and reduce), some of the gender gaps discussed. These gaps interact with the specific sectoral features of the CCSs. We have identified five different aspects of gender inequality: gender stereo-types, access to decision-making and leadership roles, access to resources and the gender pay gap, access to the arts labour market and sexual harassment.“

Marilena Vecco, *Professor for Entrepreneurship Burgundy Business School, Dijon, France*

„What do we need data for? I found two possibilities: to show gaps and imbalance and to guide public policies. Data and evidence should underpin decisions regarding which measures to introduce in order to combat gender imbalance. This is why, as the European Expert Network on Culture and Audiovisual points out, there is an urgent need for Observatories and other similar initiatives that examine cultural and creative sectors.“

Flavia Barca, *President of Acume, Member of the Italian Film and Audiovisual Council at Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism in Italy (Mibact)*

3.   The Data Gaps in the Cultural and Creative Sectors

Qualitative descriptions of the gender gap in the CCS are widely available, but compared with other economic sectors, there are several comparable pieces of EU wide data still lacking. In general, it was found that data aggregated by gender remains lacking and that surveys vary widely from sectors, field, scope and in depth. The workshop identified the following still outstanding aspects.

General data on gender and overall data on the respective CSS:
- Data on industry entry and career progression
- % of women in the labour market (by age group; by years of work in the labour market – when entered and left)
- Data on income and pay (gender pay gap).
- % in leadership roles (all management, top management, board) data about gender pay gap and access to funding
- Data on representation (women on awards juries, residencies, fellowships, stakeholders)
- Data on visibility (best practice example for the German literature sector: #womencount)

An example would be data about gender distribution in main professional academies (film schools, art academies etc.)
- Percentage of women in the training staff.
- Percentage of women enrolled and alumni.
- Men's vs. women's salaries.
- Men's vs. women's salaries by same skills and similar qualifications.

It is important to identify a set of key measures and define useful indicators to achieve them. For different CCS sectors, we need different data, as the short description highlights.

Film industry: we need not only the data on the makeup of the production team of a film - who has directed, written, produced the film - but also on all other positions creating the audiovisual content.

Music: here we need not only the data on performances and concerts and on the professionals involved, but also information about the publishing scene, about sales and downloads/streams of music.

Performing arts:here we need information about theatre productions (plays), concerts, dance performances – not only about full time staff in theatres and dance companies, but also the freelancers, the writers, choreographs, the directors and all other professionals involved.

Fine arts: beside the data on the specific artists, the data on exhibitions and curators is needed.

Best practice example: Film sector

The creative industry of film can draw on more research and studies in the area of gender data than other creative sectors. Year-long lobbying of national and European grassroots organizations, such as EWA (European Women in Audiovisual Media) or WIFT (Women in Film & Television) on European levels, as well as national groups as ProQuote Film (Germany) or FC Gloria (Austria), WFTV (UK), 50/50 (France) and initiatives of film funders such as Anna Serner in Sweden (as well as Austrian or French institutions) have led to the beginning of the collection of comparable EU Data. Through the international studies of EWA and the European Audiovisual Observatory there is comparable data demonstrating the gender gap in the film industry.

The EWA Study (2017) compared the directors for film and television in seven European countries and showed that the gender gap is prevalent in all countries. The research showed that, even though almost half of the film school alumni are female, only fifth of the films are directed by women. The financial gap is even wider, since only 16 percent of the funding goes to female led films. The data does show national differences, which can be correlated directly with policies (France, Austria).

Lately the European Audiovisual Observatory (2020) started publishing data on the gender of directors and writers of European produced cinema films. The data illustrates the gender gap over all European countries. The numbers show European feature films produced between 2015 and 2018 and released in cinemas in Europe between 2018 and 2019, the share of female directors various from 4 percent in some countries (Greece, Macedonia) to 30 percent in Austria and the Nordic countries. The overall average stands at 22 percent. The share of female scriptwriters stands at 25%.

An example of "positive action": in the provision of "automatic contributions" provided for by the Franceschini Act on cinema and audio-visual media services, one of the indicators regarding the promotion of gender equality, values an extra 10 points for those film, television, web and animation productions where the majority of authors are female and 15 points those productions directed by women. Same criteria for home entertainment, distributions and publishers of films directed and scripted by women. Similar policies, such as the gender incentive in Austria and the funding policies in Sweden lead to a narrowing of the gender gap.

Austria works with gender incentives to strengthen the presence of female directors.

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4.   Why do we need data?

Gender data comparing the different cultural sectors across the EU is rarely available. But only with comprehensive and continuous data, is there the possibility 1) To show gaps and imbalance and 2) To guide public policies. Data and evidence should underpin decisions regarding the measures that need to be introduced in order to combat gender imbalance. This is the reason, as the European Expert Network on Culture and Audiovisual points out in 2015, there is an urgent need for EU wide observatories or similar initiatives that examine cultural and creative sectors.

We need this data to ensure and create transparency in the CCS. The data on gender equality regarding the labour market (pay equality, number of women in top positions, etc., with particular attention to the precariousness that mostly affects women) and analysis of the content of narratives (a vehicle for stereotype content, lack of female voices especially if authoritative) are scarcely detected, even when they concern the public sector. The lack of data hinders the full understanding of the phenomenon and the definition of appropriate remedies, through the activation of targeted and effective public policies. If the data is available, then an obligation for all public organizations (and any organization that seeks public funds) could be enforced. This would lead to transparent gender policies (overall workforce, senior positions, salaries, etc.) and an obligation for all public organizations (and any organization that seeks public funds) to be transparent in their recruiting processes (declaring, in particular, profile and skills they require for top management) while, at the same time, information and database with women curricula should be made available.

Best practice example: National Observatory (e.g. in France the National Statistics Office has an Observatoire de l'égalité entre femmes et hommes dans la culture et la communication which annually publishes gender statistics)

5. Why don't we have this data?

What are the barriers and problems in data collection? Most answers cite the financial cost of conducting the research, the lack of transnational networking and human resources at the national level.

But there are also other reasons. There is a discrepancy between standard economic measurement methods and those used in creative industries: (a) standard methods rely on "units of measurement" that are either difficult to access or do not exist in the creative industries (e.g., workers permanently employed in one occupation and industry) (b) standard measures use indicators such as pay, length of employment that are less meaningful in the creative industries than elsewhere. Measures of success such as awards, creation of interesting art, quality of creative work are also important and are not measured.

Measures of unit in the CCS, are not the people employed full/part time in the industry. The output of the CCS is rather an exhibition, a film, a book, a piece of art, a concert, or a show. Each sector will have different units of measurements. In the film industry, a single film or television show, and the people involved in the production on a freelance basis should be considered. This makes the collection of statistics easier, than for example data for the music sector. In the music sector people involved in a concert include the composer, the musicians performing several times at different venues. So, the unit of measurement on the performing arts sector would be the individual concert or show, analyzing the people involved in this performance. The unit of measurement in the literature sector or the fine arts differs again. Even though the creator of the book or painting is easily identified, to be visible, there needs to be a publisher in the literature field and in fine art, we need curators and places to organize the exhibitions. In short, there is a need to find comparable measurements of units across the creative fields.

One other aspect is ideological challenges in the creative sector. Very often, the argument posed is that the creative sector can never be sexist or racist since the only criteria that counts is the artistic and creative quality. So creative economy organizations may perceive the question of diversity data as a violation of the imperative of creative quality. That this argument does not hold, is proven by various research and by the half female students of music, art and film schools. Nevertheless, it persists in the CCS. If women pass the tough entrance criteria in the education institutions, why are they not "good" enough for the art, music or film economy? Real gender-blind recruitments, as adopted by some orchestras, with auditions behind curtains on carpets, reveal the unconscious gender bias of the CCS sector. One other aspect hindering the collection of gender data, is the difficulty in accessing data held by private and public institutions. Here regulation to inform about gender spread e.g. for all public or private theatre companies, reporting on the plays performed in one year, the actors, directors and writers involved and the aggregate pay, would help to overcome the difficulties in collecting the data.

6.   Recommendations and Actions

What are the solutions to close the data gap?

There is a need to develop a systematic data monitoring system per sector across Europe. This will create an awareness for the development of appropriate policies and adoption of good practices. To achieve this goal, collaborations with a range of institutions, organizations and groups active on this issue needs to be organized to ensure a holistic approach. Following this process, we can imagine a two-fold approach: firstly find small amounts but significant and comparable data in each CCI sector. Secondly, identify a set of main aims/measures and define useful indicators to achieve them.

We need to develop (big) data collection methods that fit the lived reality of the creative industries. In order to do this, there is a need to work with grassroots organizations to better ensure the relevance of the data collected.

As a long-term path to the data there is the proposal to create an European directorate (or Observatory) for the coordination of data collection and analysis project, e.g. under the auspices of supranational working associations such as the European Writers' Council (EWC), European Women in Audiovisual Media (EWA) and other Pan-European organizations for the different sectors, within these the creation of national working groups with the definition of priorities of data to be collected and analyzed. The input of the creative sector is essential.

This interdisciplinary research on gender equality - sharing practices and examples between EU Member States will lead to the possibility to harmonize laws and policies on CCSs to incentive the economic, social and cultural advancement in gender parity.

These policies should address, the balance of the representation of men and women in organizations and positions and to facilitate and support women in the CCSs. This will adjust the social norms and values and will promote social and cultural change regarding the perceptions of men and women in European societies, and regarding the value attributed to the capabilities and work.

To erase gender stereotypes short-term:
- Advocacy/Awareness raising practices such as awards and social media campaigns to
- promote the awareness and visibility of women in the arts and cultural sectors
- Events to celebrate women's performances
- Specific training and mentorship

For the future we need to create algorithms without gender stereotypes. It is important to regulate the AI systems. So far, the programmes that regulate the indexing of information (and the consequent policies) are mostly calibrated on the male population, and this is having a dangerous accelerating effect on gender stereotyping and will have increasingly disruptive effects over time.

*"My wish for the future: I want it to be no longer special when just as many, or sometimes more, women authors as men are reviewed, taught in the textbook canon, appointed to juries or win the most highly endowed prizes. Until then: let's count women." **Nina George**, Novelist, President of the European Writers' Council.*

Conclusion

To highlight, compare and reduce the gender data gap in the context of the European CCS, efforts are needed at the European level. Only by standardizing the survey data can comparable results be obtained.

It needs the support of an institution within the framework of the EU to reduce the gender data gap. An institution like EIGE, in cooperation with universities and supranational organizations from the creative industries, comparable gender data could be collected for the different CSS. The prerequisite is on the one hand the political will to reduce and close the gender data gap, and on the other hand the financial support for such a project.

Recommended Reading and Research

Vecco et al. (2019): Gender gaps in the Cultural and Creative Sectors, European Expert Network on Culture and Audiovisual (EENCA), 2019.
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European Women's Audiovisual Network (EWA), 2016: Where are the Women Directors? Report on Gender Equality for Directors in the European Film Industry 2006-2013**.**
http://www.ewawomen.com/en/research-.html
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https://rm.coe.int/female-directors-and-screenwriters-july-2020/16809ef77b.